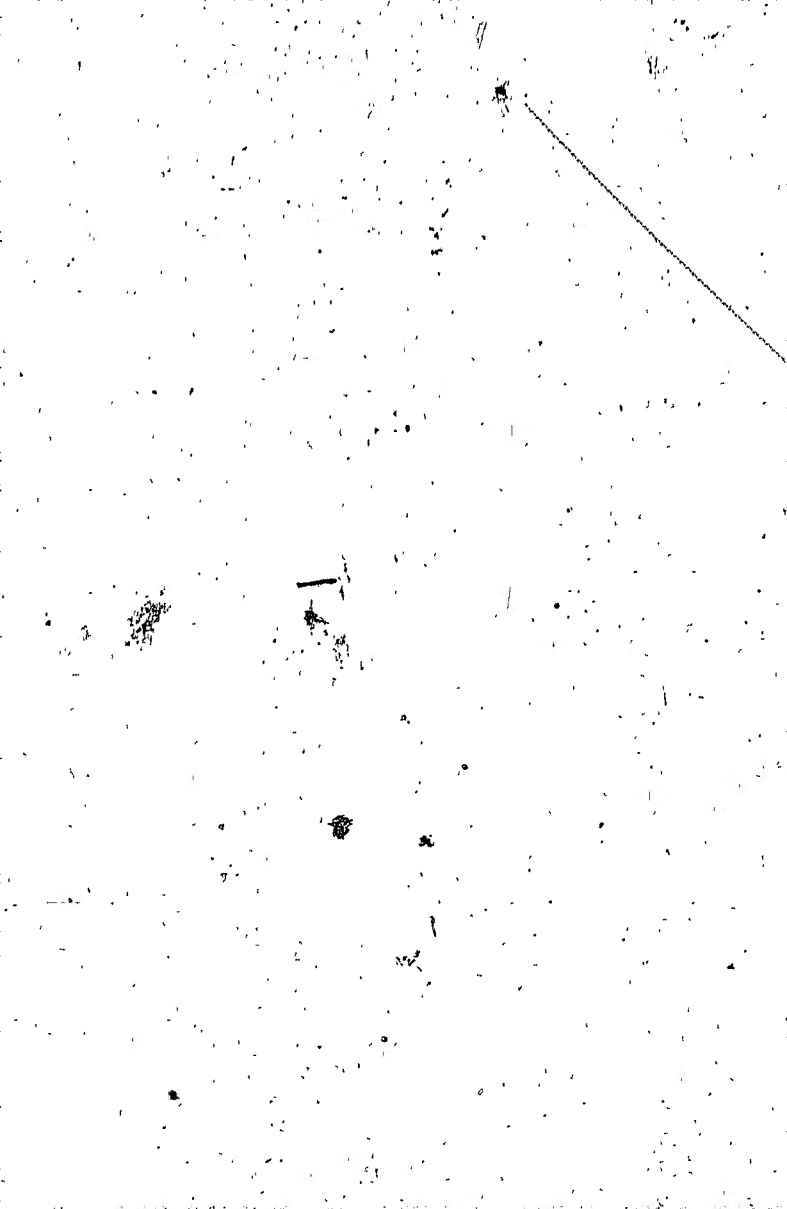


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A POLICEMAN FROM ETON

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A POLICEMAN FROM ETON

HIS PRAIRIE DIARY

BY CAPT. R. W. CAMPBELL

AUTHOR OF "PRIVATE SPUD TAMSON," ETC.

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TO
LIEUT.-COL. CORTLANDT STARNES
AND
THE GENTLEMEN OF
THE PLAINS

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A POLICEMAN FROM ETON

CHAPTER I

I JOIN THE FORCE

PRINCE CHARLIE! That's my nick-name in the Squadron. Rather effeminate, but I imagine it is due to my being baptised Charles Edward Stuart. A high-sounding name for a plain policeman on the prairie, but I was not born a policeman. I was born an idler. Unfortunately my father spent the money I was to idle with, so I had to skip Sandhurst and go West. Vanity, too, is my inheritance. I really joined the North-West Mounted Police because I hated being nobody and acting the greasy or chilly part of cook-lumberman in British Columbia. I love a red coat. Feel happy on a charger. And tremendously important when galloping after Indians or doing the Musical Ride before the girls of Regina or Winnipeg.

The girls still say I'm good looking!

It would be absurd to state that I went West in

search of romance. I went because I had to. If I had stayed in the Old Country I would have been compelled by force of circumstances and the absence of any technical training to be a coal-heaver or a dustman. Snobbery compelled me to decline such appointments, maps roused the wander-lust, and tradition thrust me into the saddle and a red coat. Of course I was romantic, tremendously romantic. I was born in a castle which commanded a romantic glen. As a youth I wandered through the lore of ages. My people always insisted that the sword was a mightier thing than the cash-box or the pen. When I'm dreadfully hard up (about three times a week) I'm inclined to curse the aforesaid tradition. But once I'm on my charger I forget £ s. d. and thank God for the freedom of the plains.

My children and my children's children, when they pick up my prairie snap-shots, will be unable to say, "Our Dad" or "Our Grandad" was a horrible profiteer. My salary, for a long time, was fifty cents a day. For that magnificent sum I swore to defend His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, Canada, the Indians, the Homesteaders, etc., etc.,

So Help me God!

as the attestation paper goes. Of course, I did not reckon on a rough time. My conception of the North-West Police I had gained from the illustrated

magazines. Joining up was therefore pictured as walking into a barracks, shaking hands with the Colonel, receiving the red coat and a first-class charger, then riding out to see the lovely ladies of Regina.

What a delusion! What a snare!

"Who are you?" old Sergeant-Major Churchill said.

"Stuart's my name," I replied.

"Get the hold of that dung-barrow and shift that dung-heap from here to there," pointing to a mound of manure like Ben Nevis.

"Dung-heap?" I said in a surprised way.

"Yes. Jump to it!" he roared.

I jumped, but oh my father! What a job! What a degradation! All the way from Halifax I had dreamed of silver spurs, musical rides, medals for valour, and bouquets from the ladies of the West, and here I was a common or garden ostler. By heavens! I did feel offended, fed up, mutinous, murderous.

"You look worried," said another fellow (Prosy by name).

"Rather."

"That's nothing. You'll have to wring your shirt for a drink and chew your boots for dinner when you get out on detachment."

"You're cheerful," I replied, lighting a cigarette and preparing to gossip.

"At times. . . . Have you insured yourself?" he inquired.

"No."

"Better take out a policy."

"Why?"

"There's a horse here called 'Mad Jimmy.' He's killed three men within a month. The latest rookie always gets him. Can you ride?"

"Not much," I said gloomily.

"I'm sorry for you," declared this morbid person.

"Get on with that dung shifting," roared Sergeant-Major Churchill.

"Oh, h——! good-bye, I'll see you again," I muttered to Prosy.

"That's the S.M. who chewed the ear of an Eskimo," whispered Prosy as he strolled away.

A cheerful chap, eh?

But even in this desert of disillusionment I discovered a gleam of joy. This was in the person of Miss Worthy, sister of one of our officers, and a most charming girl. She looked so pretty in her summer attire. As she passed perspiring me, she remarked: "Nasty, isn't it? Never mind, you'll get nicer jobs as you get on," and she faded away.

I felt awfully grateful. She was so pretty. And it was rather nice of her to speak to a common or garden trooper. The troopers, however, were

all men of good birth or instincts. It was largely a corps of gentlemen. But the discipline! The Guards know nothing about discipline. We did everything on the run. It was the correct thing to do a sort of official tremble when a big-wig spoke to us. And that sergeant-major! . . . ? . . . ! . . . !

The barrack-room was not quite to my fancy—at first. It was so difficult to eradicate boyish impressions of the romantic order. The glamour of the magazines was so hard to destroy. And somehow I did feel entitled to, at least, a feather bed and a couple of pillows. Gee whiz! they gave me straw. Charles Edward Stuart on straw! And the blankets! Like emery paper! One always had to wear pyjamas to prevent these blankets irritating the legs. . . . And no carpets! . . . Not a table-cloth! . . . Nothing in the line of a dinner-set. . . . Privacy? None whatever!

According to poets and certain authors, troopers of the North-West Mounted Police sit about discussing Longfellow or Tennyson, or writing out cheques to the family retainers. But when I entered my room, I found an Oxford man walking about with just a towel round his hips and giving the troops a hiccoughed translation of Omar Khayyam. He stopped when I entered.

“You’re . . . hic . . . Stuart?” he said.

"Yes."

"You'll . . . hic . . . be dead to-morrow. You're riding Mad Jimmy. . . . We'll bury you . . . hic . . . all right. That's a parson over there," pointing to a long solemn-looking gent lying on a bed. "He's damned . . . hic . . . good at the Burial Service. Lost his job for kissing the charwoman. Nice fellow, aren't you, Awkins?"

"Go to —," muttered Awkins, who was reading Oscar Wilde's *Ballad of Reading Gaol*.

I divined at once that my part was the part of the rookie. Obviously I had to go through the mill. However, at Eton I had been well licked. Do what you're told and ask no questions was apparently the golden rule. This never prevents ragging, but it ensures that the ragging is good natured. And after all I was young. I was a bit of a snob. For the first hour in the police I felt superior to all, even the officers. Ragging was good for me, but it was humiliating at times. Had I posted myself up in military terms, many useless messages might have been avoided. For example, Prosy, that terrible joker, gave me a bucket of whitewash and a brush about 9.30 p.m. that night.

"What's this for?"

"Go and see the sergeant-major; ask him if you may whitewash 'The Last Post,'" he said. You know, of course, that "The Last Post" is a

bugle-call. But in my innocence I went, and knocked at the S.M.'s door.

"Well," he roared. I almost dropped the bucket with fright.

"Please, sir. . . . Please. . . ."

"Please what, you young ass?"

"May I whitewash the Last Post?"

"Who sent you here?" he thundered, his eyes sparkling.

"Trooper Prosy, sir."

"Tell him he's under arrest. Orderly-room to-morrow. Now go and whitewash your grandmother. You have the intelligence of a hen!" and he banged the door.

This was the cheerful existence I led for a few weeks. At the mercy of merciless brigands. Still, they were very jolly. I have never seen a more handsome lot of men. Tall, lean, clean cut, bronzed; with beautiful features and such manly airs. Tough too, horribly tough. When they got tiddley, by heavens they could fight! The Oxford Don almost crushed my ribs in a Rugger match with a loaf of bread. It was this bright gentleman who, a week later, sent me to ask Sergeant Killern, the provo sergeant, for the key of the square. Oh! I was innocent. If I had been born a poacher I would at least have had the cuteness to know that a square is a square, and no key ever invented could open an enclosed square of fresh air. But off I went.

"Hello!" he shouted, wiping his huge moustache with the back of his hand.

"The key, sergeant."

"What key?"

"The key of the square."

"Here, my lad, what service have you got?" he inquired in an angry way.

"One week, sergeant."

"And do you really believe there is a key to that place?" pointing to the open patch of ground.

"Really . . . I never thought . . . I'm most awfully sorry——"

"Sorry, damn you! You're a policeman. You've got to think. These fellows are pulling your leg."

"Didn't they pull yours, sergeant, when you enlisted?" I suggested, a little fed up.

"Eh . . . well . . . they did," and he grinned.

I went back and hit the Oxford man over the head with a broom. That physical retort ended that side of the ragging.

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But the riding-school! . . . Oh my father! . . . What an experience! . . . And what horses! . . . All the mad steeds of Argentine, Arabia, and Montana seemed to have been gathered together. Many were devils; all were humorists. Well they knew that we (the rookies) were as green as young cabbages and hardly able to keep upright

on donkeys never mind good-going police horses. . . . And Mad Jimmy! . . . Fury of the Furies! . . . Teeth like razors, and didn't he show them. . . . Eyes that blazed fire, murder, and sudden death. Nostrils that snorted anger and insolence. And his legs. . . . Oh, those legs! . . . They could kick a trooper from terra firma right up to Mars. You lucky persons who ride in tubes, tram-cars, and Fords can hardly understand what it means to feed, to saddle, then to ride—or attempt to ride—Mad Jimmy. And I had to ride him, or rather I was told off to ride him.

"He's not so bad," said the wily Prosy the night before.

"Isn't he?" I replied, just mad for consolation.

"No. When you go in to saddle him, climb over from the next stall and hand him a bit of sugar. He's very fond of sugar. When he's chewing it, slip on the saddle, then work on his bridle. You'll manage all right. Don't worry!"

Didn't I worry! I never slept that night. Visions of hospital, broken legs, concussion of the brain, etc., etc., went flying through my head. But I conjured up a belief that if I did get kicked I would see the lovely Miss Worthy, who took a keen interest in the sick troopers of the Mounted Police.

Hang it all, it was worth being kicked.

* * * *

Full of beans I went to the stable. I was

going to do it. I *would* saddle him ; yes, *and* ride him too. I was the fellow who was going to do it at the first shot. Tremendously brave, I marched up to the edge of his stall. . . . O Lord ! I quailed. His ears went back like a rabbit's. He lashed his tail. He squealed, he squirmed, right then left, and *up* went two heels in the air. I stood pale and baffled.

"Get a move on !" roared a sergeant.

A move on ! Just fancy ! What delightful persons these sergeants are !

"Saddle up !" he shouted again.

I had to do it ; that is the law of the North-West Mounted Police. So I hopped over the side of the stall and gave him the sugar. He took it all right, then I slid down beside him to put on the saddle. But that devil Prosy had not told me that Mad Jimmy was also mad with toothache. He had a bad molar. The sugar got in. He showed his teeth, howled, then jammed me with his hind quarters and commenced to bite me like a savage.

"You swine ! . . . You horrible swine !" and I banged his nose with the bridle. Then he started to kick. I slipped out from the stall, but he gave me a beauty with his hind feet and sent me flying across the stable in between another horse's legs. Fortunately this animal was a gentleman. It came from Ontario.

"What's all the trouble about?" said the same cold sergeant.

"Can't you see?" I exclaimed, very annoyed.

"That's nothing! . . . Here! . . . Give me that bridle!"

I handed the bridle to him.

"Jimmy! . . . Jimmy! . . . Oh, Jimmy! . . . What's up, old fellow?" he said, in that way which a horse understands. I was astonished at the sudden change in the horse's manner. He became calm. The sergeant walked quietly into his stall, laid his hand on his neck, and began to talk to him in a low and friendly voice. This surely was the magic of the horsey man. The sergeant was a perfect terror to recruits, but horses were his friends. But to few are given the secret to handle the wild species in this way. And he was the only man in Regina who could handle Jimmy. He slipped the bridle over his head, put on the saddle; only once did Jimmy wince and half attempt to bite.

"Jimmy! It's me. You don't bite me, you know," and he patted him. Then he turned his head round and said: "Here, Stuart, there's your horse. If I had the man who spoiled that horse when he was being broken, I would shoot him. Jimmy's a good horse, and he's a pal of mine. Poor Jimmy! It's your nerves. It's your nerves," and he patted him on the neck as I led him away.

I was much impressed, even touched. It was a lesson in love and kindness which I have never forgotten. Even now it is only will power which compels me to resist hitting a man down who is guilty of unkindness to a horse. But to the riding-school.

Just picture that fierce sergeant-major in the centre. He was an old Cavalry hand, straight as a lance, a king among men, with eyes that caught the little defects of human nature and a tongue that *could* bite. As I led Jimmy into the ring, I felt like the little boy who was going to have his bottom well smacked for stealing pears.

"Stand to your horses," he shouted.

We stood as near to the animals as it seemed wise to do.

"Stand to your horses, I said. Stuart, you're holding your bridle like a stick of dynamite. Stand to, I say. Jimmy can only eat half a pound at a time."

The whole school grinned.

"Prepare to mount," was the next command.

I gripped the reins, and being rather excited, slipped my right foot into the stirrup instead of the left.

"Get that right foot out of it," he roared.

"That's the way a woman or a clown wants to mount. You ought to know horses; if you don't you've seen them in the toy shops. . . . Stand steady, Prosy! I have my eye on you. Damn

smart fellow with the ladies at a ball, but I'll take it out of you."

"Good egg," muttered Prosy, who was a perfect torment to all.

"Mount!" roared the S.M. when none expected the order. Heavens! what a scramble! It was like the Jews trying to escape on 'bus horses from the Aberdeen Stock Exchange. Some fell on the saddle, some on the neck, some fell by the wayside, but I was gently tossed into the air and fell between Jimmy's legs. He never kicked; he was a true sportsman.

"Who told you to lie down?" roared the sergeant-major.

"Jimmy," I shouted, not giving a damn for the consequences.

The school rocked with laughter, and I saw the orderly officer turn about and run out to hide the grin on his face.

"Silence!" bellowed the S.M.

I trembled like a leaf.

"Talk to me, would you. You pale-face infant! I'm the S.M. of this school, and by Heaven, I'll take it out of your skin. . . . Mount!"

I mounted.

"Walk march."

The Ride moved round.

"T-r-rot!"

The jumble began. There was a loyal attempt

to look like the Life Guards, but the flesh, or rather the knees, were weak. Wobble. Wobble. Wobble. Flump. Flump. Flump. It must have been a sad and sorry spectacle for the riding-master.

Recruits on horses always obey the instinct of self-preservation. So they grabbed the good old neck. So handy! So sure! So jolly safe when one feels in danger of death from a thousand heels in the stomach and—think of it—a good big hoof *in the face*. I was taking no chances with Jimmy. He was as skittish as a young colt on a May morning, and he had such a pleasant little way of humping his back and letting go his hind feet. But he had a jolly good neck. And I did hang on. What a lovely policeman I looked, going round, hanging, hanging, hanging on.

Then the old rascal (the S.M.) cracked his whip.

Jimmy went off like a motor car. I whirled round, now hanging below his neck and thinking of home. I felt quite sure I was an ass not to have taken a scavenger's job in Clapham. Next Jimmy *heaved* and I—

tumbled

tumbled

tumbled.

All I saw was—

Legs.

Legs.

Legs.

"Halt!" bellowed the S.M.

The horses halted like one man, or rather like one horse, Jimmy included.

"Pick up the pieces," was the S.M.'s sarcastic comment.

I picked myself up, also my cap. One fellow rescued a monocle; while the man from Oxford went round muttering: "Where the ——'s my teeth!"

This performance goes on in all the riding-schools of the world, but my belief is that this school was the toughest show out of Texas. Our S.M. was known as "The Goods," and he delivered the goods. The Italians are awfully smart at sliding down precipices and jumping over dinner-tables. The French at St. Cyr are decidedly pretty riding like Louis XIV when the ladies are looking on. And the Americans honestly believe their cowboys to be marvels. They are in some things, but for graceful riding, endurance, negotiating rivers or snow-packed prairies, none can beat the North-West Mounted Police. It is not good form to say that, but there are miserable souls in high places who have a spite on us, who would do away with us, so it is well to remind them that while they chew their vile cigars in parlour cars, we are always willing to take a chance on a broncho, and do our bit to keep bandits over The Line, horse thieves in bed, and rum runners eating aspirin while they

await the heavy footfall and the quiet command,
 "Hands up!"

At the time I hated the riding-school; just as I hated reveille and defaulters' drill. I loathed stables and horse inspections. Who really likes work? Who loves being tossed like a ball from the back of a broncho? Who worships manure and broom broom brooming? Recruits are always in terror of those solemn and severe commanders who come round in white kid gloves and slip them over the horses' hides. There was no poetry in the business. One was too sad and sorry to sit down and pen orations on the marvels of the school and the glories of the ride. Eton had given me a sense of discipline. But the fagging was a poor preparation for the show-a-leg trick at the dawn or washing greasy plates in cold, cold water. And yet . . . and yet . . . it was jolly good fun.

* * * *

As said before, the pay—at that time—was fifty cents a day. A squadron cynic insisted this was designed to cultivate virtue, but to speak the truth, I believe it was invented to restrain the evils inherent in those who have the wander-lust. To represent myself or my friends as angels in red coats would be absurd. Some authors have pictured us as strong, silent super-men, with our passions in cold storage and the New Testament side by side with the Manual of the North-West Mounted Police.

True we were romantic, and the job was romantic. All naughty boys are also romantic. Many of us had known the lights of London and tasted the fruits of New York, Montreal, and Ottawa. To the adventurer is given abundance of passion or he would not be an adventurer. It is the good, solid, tax-paying, marrying man who stays at home and gets behind the Church and pillars of society. The fellow who throws his bridle over his shoulder has always a way with him. Usually he can eat with dignity the meals of the Bishop and talk to a barmaid on the way home.

We loved Romance and the ways of women. Almost all had secrets in their hearts. Away in the Old Land there were women in Mayfair, Suburbia, and the Counties who sighed at the memory of those men who slept in my hut. At kit-inspections photos somehow were tumbled about. One could at a glance see the secrets in men's souls. Some were younger sons and could not marry. Oh, pity them, for to them Fate is so unkind! Others had fooled and would not wed. While some had fallen short of the glory of God and escaped the penalty of outraged devotion. Thus we were a bundle of moods and devotion. God and the Devil were intertwined. Byron and Shelley might easily have felt at home. Still there were saving graces. In the quiet half-hours men thought of home, of dear, kind, lovely old women who

had borne them; of fathers stern but true; of sisters and other men's sisters who had all the charm of our wonderful race.

A few of us did peep into the Golden Treasury and renew our worship of the things that should be, rather than the things that are. In those quiet hours I loved my comrades more. The brute was silent. Nobility came out. Culture, that god-like virtue, swept around the room. This helped to keep us pure and make us smile like boys.

And discipline is a wonderful thing. In my soul I am ever at war with orders; yet I, too, am a martinet. We are all weak. We are all lazy. At times, we would be awful fools were it not that duty is duty and example to others a needful thing. There is no heroism in this sort of stuff. But who is heroic? God has given many of us a share of wisdom, but how often He has forgotten to dole out strength. Of course, that is the glory—and the peril—of the Great Plan. We are the architects of our own fortunes, authors of our own follies and feints at immortality. To the brave the scheme is fine. It is so good to win the game off one's own bat. But had it not been for discipline many of us might have been as weak as Indians for firewater and more foolish than Henry VIII for the monopoly of loveliness. Fifty cents a day was surely wise.

Nevertheless, we enjoyed ourselves in a simple

way, for life is our portion, and who would have denied us the smiles of Regina or the glad hand of comely women from the farms? A policeman, like a soldier, is never too tired to dance, never too busy to steal an hour to warble to a milliner or a cook. There were some wonderful cooks in Regina at that time. Recruits, no matter how well born, were just like Tommy Atkins, very glad to eat from the hand of Bridget and kiss Matilda below stairs, or rather in the back kitchen, for in Canada only the Heater sits below. It will be said that this is not the way of Eton. Is Eton so different from MacGill, Kingston, Harvard, Yale, Mombassa, Bagdad, and Simla? Experience prompts the suggestion that if the unruly boys of Eton would learn the arts of love from pretty housemaids they might save themselves from the cynicism of Bond Street and the degradation of Leicester Square. Many a good friend I have found in the humble homesteads of the West. I have seen Madonna at the wash-tub, Venus feeding hens, and Joan reaping the fields, while her husband licked the wounds of war. So I am not going to be true to type, as they say, and write snobbish libels about the girls in the West. The girls were, on the whole, not very pretty, but, by Jove! they were kind. And the majority were good—good as gold.

Naturally, recruits like to display their chests and legs. Napoleon did that. So does Harry

Lauder. But Harry's legs would not have had a look in with those stalwart calves in blue breeches and brown riding-boots. It was a long, long walk to town, but we walked.. It was a long—long—long walk back home, but we had to do it or face the beak at the dawn. And what fun at those homely tea-parties! Not much talk about Ibsen, Bernard Shaw, or Kipling. Very little understanding about 10, Downing Street, August 12th, or the May meetings. Love was mixed up with the price of wheat, kisses with corner lots and prairie fires, and engagement rings were sandwiched between Methodist hymns and the price of eggs. Positively boring to the best people who keep barbed wire round their mansions in the Old Country, but not to us. This Western country has a democracy which at first repels, but ultimately becomes attractive. And we were policemen. We had to know the good and bad sides of human nature: that knowledge is not acquired in nurseries, blue books, or universities. I love the freedom of the plains.

* * * *

In barracks we had our own little social affairs. The commandant, whom I will call Colonel Cherry, was a great martinet, but a great scholar and gentleman. His daughters were pretty and so friendly with all. The officers were mainly of the same stern variety, but their prestige was

tremendous; they had done things; they had faced death again and again. Bravery commands respect and adoration, and we gave it in full. And their wives and children were so charming and well bred.

It is said that Canada has no society, no grouping of superior minds and manners. This is partly true of the new suburbs of Winnipeg, Toronto, and Montreal, where wealth is the standard, but it is not true of the pioneers. The best blood of Britain, Canada, and America could be found in the North-West Police, the Hudson Bay Company, C.P.R., C.N.R., and other concerns. The United Empire Loyalists were truly aristocrats. In Halifax, St. John's, Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Calgary, Regina, and Vancouver one can see the old and bold; ladies and gentlemen to their finger-tips; men and women who fought and wrestled, not for dollars, but for Canada, for home, yea, even for God. Who has not heard of Bishop Lloyd, Ralph Connor, Bishop MacDonnell, and that glorious company of adventurous divines who took their meat where they found it, and carried the Cross behind the shovel and the gun?

* * * *

Our first dance was therefore a pleasant surprise to me. In that lonely police barracks, thousands of miles from the Old World, one caught the accents of the cultured citizens of Eastern Canada, Mayfair,

Oxford, Boston, Harvard, and Yale. The merri-
ment was hearty, but the manners were fine. One
simply had to be a gentleman to be appreciated
and understood. Colonel Cherry and his officers
maintained the traditions of the Force. These
traditions made it possible for the best born and
most cultured to accept a subordinate rôle and
enjoy the game.

Marjory Worthy was belle of the ball.

A lovely woman. Young yet wise. Superbly
modelled. A fine head and arresting features.
The carriage of a queen. The simple charms of a
good sweet girl. Other girls were equally charming,
but I had only eyes for Marjory. My first thought
was one of pity that such a lovely woman was
marooned on the prairie. But she asked no pity,
she had no need of it. She was Canadian born,
daughter of an old blood of the Sixtieth Rifles,
and passionately devoted to the police and the
prairie.

"May I have the pleasure of a dance with you,
Miss Worthy?"

"With pleasure," she replied.

We whirled into the throng. She danced so
well and even piloted me around in my heavy
boots. The snob within me was satisfied. I felt
at home. I was dancing with my own kin. A most
unworthy thought, but it takes time to get rid of
the conventions of home. Marjory made me forget

the riding-school, the barrack-room, defaulters' drill, and washing greasy pans. She was a woman to know, to woo and win. But I was only a trooper. And I inwardly cursed my luck.

"What *are* you thinking about, Mr. Stuart?" she asked.

"I was just wishing I was an inmate of the officers' mess."

"Why?"

"So that I would have the privilege to speak to you when I may."

"A policeman always has that privilege," was her answer.

"He has and he hasn't. One must accept the inferior rôle. And I have heard about the fellow who got sent to the Arctic for falling in love with an officer's daughter. I don't want to go to the Arctic—while you are about."

"You are amusing," she replied.

"Is that fellow still in the frozen north?" I inquired.

"Oh yes, but she's still in love with him. It is rather silly trying to prevent their union. Love is thicker than water, and he is a gentleman."

"I wonder if you have been the cause of sending any one to the cold parts?"

"Not that I am aware of. My mother is not of a jealous disposition; many of the troopers are my friends. I have been on detachment, you know."

"Have you really? Rather tough, isn't it, for a nice girl?"

"Not at all. My mother was a pioneer. I love the prairie. We who are Canadians are passionately devoted to the West."

"I cannot understand that—yet."

"No. You will not understand it for three years. The West is so warm in summer, so cold in winter. There are no luxuries, and little society. One gets boiled up or frozen. Sometimes we get catty, especially in winter when we see too much of each other. And yet it is a wonderful country. I love it. It is so free. The broad prairie enters into one's soul. And there is so much to be done. I'm sure you will love it yet. And I know you will never go home for good."

"Why?"

"You simply can't. There is a magic and mystery here. One can't explain it. It must be experienced to be understood. I have seen our policemen suffer terrible things, yet they carry on. They could make fortunes, but they seem happy with a few dollars a week. I'm so proud of them. It is so nice to belong to the police."

"I feel better now," I remarked.

"Have you been home-sick?"

"Not exactly, but horse-sick, stable-sick; you can understand."

"I do, but I did laugh at you on your first job."

"How mean of you!"

"Yes, but the raw rookie has to get his foot into the business."

"I know, I know, but what a tough apprenticeship! And *that* horse!"

"Mad Jimmy?"

"Yes."

"Why, he's the pet of the police. He is famous. We are all rather fond of Jimmy. He's a character."

"A jolly tough one."

"Like the policemen. You are all sinners, you know," and she looked me frankly between the eyes.

"How do you know, Miss Worthy?"

"Know! My dear boy, that is just the reason why you all make such good policemen."

"I thought you were a child."

"No, a Canadian."

"Then you understand."

"We have to in this wild country. We ask no questions. The past is past when a man joins up. And I have met most interesting troopers. We had a descendant of Lady Godiva's here, a Danish prince, son of a President of U.S.A. French and German officers too. All sorts we get. So life to me is a round of amusement and excitement."

"You have evaded the banns though."

"I love them all," was her tactful rejoinder.

"Your mission, Miss Worthy, is the Force; not a single member of it?"

"Oh, I don't know," and she blushed rather prettily.

"I am glad I met you."

"Why?"

"You remind me of home. I really couldn't be a savage while you were about."

"You also remind me of home."

"I thought you were a Canadian."

"Yes, also a homing bird. I have never been home, but I, at times, have a fearful hunger to see dad's old place. The policemen from the Old Country bring me a breath of the counties; and things cultured and so old. I am a prairie girl, but I often hear the call of courts, books, modes, and salons."

"What do you mean?"

"Oh, I don't know," was her confused reply.

"Is this it: you are a Canadian; also, like me, a bit of a snob?"

"I hate that word."

"You know what I mean?"

"Yes."

"I wonder now if you would marry a really wild fellow with a ranch in the wilderness, lots of money, and all that sort of thing?"

"I am not sure."

"Why?"

"I am a police woman. I have little use for money. I have been taught to admire character."

"And good manners?"

"Certainly."

"I never expected to find romance out here."

"The West is full of it. We are not over-educated, and so we dream our dreams."

"I wish I was in them."

"You *are* a daring one."

"Perhaps, but don't deny me my ten minutes of romance. I see half a dozen others just mad to dance with you, so I'm having my cake while I can eat it. . . . I wonder if you are engaged for the next dance?"

"No."

"May we look at the stars?"

"Hardly, but we can sit in the ante-room."

"Righto!"

So we went to the ante-room, not much of an ante-room by the way, but that night it was a sort of heaven. I'm not an angel, as I said before, but Marjory somehow stilled the evil things and roused the good. I let her talk; she was so interesting. It was so nice to be wafted back into the days of her father, a British officer and pioneer of Ontario. The sufferings of this fine man seemed incredible, yet they were ordinary, for all suffered in the early pioneering times. By grit he won through, not to a fortune, but to sufficient for

the day and the honour of his clan. He had educated his sons for the army and the bar. Like Marjory, all carried the marks of gentility, the sense of duty, and pride of country. Her brother, though quiet and with no pretence at brilliance, was one of the greatest gentlemen of the Force.

Young as I was—and a bit of a fool—I had fallen into good hands. Unconsciously I was being moulded for the great part of a policeman. I had come to Canada for a job. With me I had carried a certain contempt for all outside my class. The Canadians—from afar—did not seem desirable people to meet, to know or live with. How immature! How horribly unjust! How English! But Marjory and the good friends in Regina had changed that. My eyes opened. My faith deepened. The scales of centuries clattered out of my scheme. I suddenly realised I was only a pup, with a lot to learn, and not much time to learn it in.

"Miss Worthy," I said, as we rose from our seat, "I want to thank you."

"What for?" she asked, somewhat embarrassed.

"For showing me the real Canadian."

"I know. . . . I know. . . . I understand," she said, with her eyes on the ground. Then she lifted her head and I saw the tears.

"Oh! . . . I'm sorry," I muttered awkwardly.

"It's all right! . . . But you've touched me. The West is dear to me. . . . And you will understand. . . . Good-bye," and she clasped my hand, so tenderly, so beautifully.

CHAPTER II

SUNSHINE AND SHADOW

"CONSTABLES C. E. Stuart and P. Donovan will proceed on Detachment Duty to Sulphur Springs, Alberta.

"They will *en route* assume charge of the Harvesters' Train.

"Horses will be taken."

This was the notice I found on the order board. Detachment duty! My heart palpitated with excitement. This was my first job. Anxious for more information I approached our sergeant. He had nothing to add. "You go, that's all I know about it." No fuss! No sympathy! Words were always few in this police force. At first this annoyed me. I expected to have a paternal set of instructions, precise orders about my rations, hints about kit, tips about falling, or rather, not falling, by the wayside, and some indication that the commissioner and officers were all *dreadfully* upset about my leaving. Not a bally word! All in the day's work. As at Oxford, no enthusiasm. The police force was not an orphan home where the

master pronounced a benediction on the parting. I felt offended. But as I rode out towards the gate Miss Worthy came forward, presented Donovan and me with a copy of Kipling's "If," and shook us both cordially by the hand. I felt pleased and touched. When through the gate I turned round, she was standing on the verandah, looking, looking. I wanted to wave, I'm sure she wanted me to wave, but I was only a trooper, and I saw the Commissioner on the steps of the officers' mess. But I went my way rejoicing.

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When the harvesters' train came in I suddenly realised there was trouble ahead. Six hundred wild men were aboard. Tough fellows every one. Booze was triumphant in parts and devilment was apparent all round.

"Hell, boys, here's the Mounties. Say, kid, have you got your gun, for by heavens you'll need to pump a ton o' lead into this bunch of hobos," shouted a red-haired ruffian who looked like an unemployable brigand.

I ignored him.

"Straight from the bloomin' nursery 'e is. Lor' luv me, 'e's a mummy's darling," shouted a Cockney.

"Ach awa', he's only a broomstick in a red coat," said a half-drunk Scotsman. By this time all had descended to the platform.

I still ignored them, for I had to see the horses shipped. When that job was done, the bell clanged to go.

"Guess we'll finish our booze, boys," said the red-headed gent.

"Yip," muttered a gink from Montreal.

"Donovan," I said, "we've got to shift these fellows."

"I'm just dyin' to fight," muttered the impetuous Irishman.

"Come on, boys, get aboard," I said quietly.

The red coat somehow sent the majority aboard. But the red-headed fellow (Buck Walker) and his pal (Doc Levine) did not budge.

"Move!" I said.

"Not on your life," was Buck's insolent reply.

"Donovan, get the other fellow," I whispered, going straight for Buck. "Are you going?"

"I guess I'll go when I'm ready."

He was a powerful man, but I was in good form. I seized him by the scruff of the neck and pushed him towards the train. He turned round and grappled, but he was half drunk. I gave his arms a rough twist. He howled like a dog.

"Are you going now?"

"Sure."

"Well done, Stuart, that's a good start," said a voice behind me.

I turned. It was the Assistant Commissioner.

"Thank you, sir."

"Good luck and good-bye," and he shook Donovan and me by the hand.

We felt awfully proud.

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The harvesters' train is not like Trans-Canada, the wonderful express. The seats are hard and the journey is slow. One has lots of time to study the crowd. And I found them interesting. They were rough but they were good at heart. These are the men who made the railways, cut the forests, and laid the roads. They hailed from the little farms of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, and Ontario. Others came from the congested labour markets of Montreal and Toronto. Harvest time was a picnic; at least on the way out. Not on the farm. Oh no! And these men *could* work. But foolish, terribly foolish, with their hard-earned dollars. Obviously one had to give them rope. From the old hands at Regina, I had gathered sufficient wisdom to realise that my job was not to be a little tin god, but to keep the train running, or rather to see this crowd did not interfere with the work of the railway gang. If they wanted to chew each other, they could chew away. If they wanted to drink, that was their business. My only duty was to maintain the balance and the law of Canada. And, by jove, they did enjoy themselves!

Fortunately we picked a quiet carriage inhabited by dōuce men from Nova Scotia. The majority were so busy figuring out how much they would have at the end of the harvest that Donovan and I had time to talk. This Donovan was a splendid type of Irishman—handsome, straight as a post, with a merry face and appealing eyes. He had roughed it all round Canada. His reminiscences were interesting. Somehow we got on to the ladies.

"Sure and you never know who you're talking to at all," he remarked.

"Explain, Donovan," I said.

"I'll tell you. When I was young and foolish I thought I would go to Prince Rupert and make a fortune selling ham and eggs. I took the boat from Vancouver. A fine boat it was. All cushions, white paint, Johnnie Walker, and apple pie. And nice people too! We had a judge, a couple of millionaires, a lot of tourists, and some lovely women. And there was one woman with a figure like Venus and eyes like big blue saucers. Oh, she was the loveliest one I've ever seen at all! I'm modest, as you know. Devil a bit was I looking at her, except when she wasn't looking at me, for I'm told that's the way to do it. But when I was looking at the waves in line with her figure, didn't she turn quick and smile! Says I: 'It's a fine day, madam.' Says she: 'It is.' 'You'll be going far?' I suggested. Says she: 'No,

only to Prince Rupert.' Says I: 'So am I.' And that settled it. I gave her two ice-creams and she seemed a friend for life. Sure and I began to think she would be a help to me in my schemes at Prince Rupert. It was her figure, you know. You've seen them figures that make men walk into lamp-posts and motor cars when they're looking at the nice round curves? "

"Oh yes, Donovan, I know."

"I needn't have troubled to ask you that at all? "

"Get on with that yarn."

"We got on well. She held my hand when we were watching the waves. And she told me who she was. A rich woman from Montana. I didn't know about Montana then. Her father had a ranch, she said. Ten thousand head of cattle, a thousand horses, sixty cowboys, five motor cars, fresh butter, and a telephone. When she told me that I held her other hand, for I've never liked work, that's why I joined this Force. This woman (I thought to myself) would keep me out of misery. Sure and she could get me back home to Kilkenny where I could hunt with the Kilkenny hounds. So I gave her another ice-cream. Yes, and a dinner with a bottle of champagne, for she was a lady who had been in Fifth Avenue, New York. Says the captain to me at the table: 'You're in luck, Mr. Donovan.' And the purser he says:

'She's worth half a million.' I had only ten dollars left but I ordered another bottle of champagne. And that night didn't I begin to blarney, about Cupid, rings, and wedding bells!"

"But did she say nothing?" I inquired.

"She spoke mainly with her eyes and the pressure of her hand. When she looked at me I thought I was near the gates of heaven. And when she pressed my hand it would have taken the Apostle Paul and ten thousand Roman chariots to pull my hand away. And here's the point. She said: 'I like you, Mr. Donovan. You're just a real good 'un. I guess you're the finest kid ever came out of Vancouver. It's your eyes I love. Why, they just tickle me to death. I'm going to take you right home to Montana and get dad to fix us up. You're too good to be walking around without a marriage ticket.'"

"What did you say, Donovan?"

"Says I: 'Encore!'

"'Yip,' says she.

"'Hooray,' says I.

"And then she kissed me."

"She kissed you first, then?" I said to Donovan.

"Sure. Didn't I think I was on velvet and began to think about writing home for my hunting suit and a stud of horses. I hadn't a ring, but she had plenty on her fingers. So I takes one off the

first finger and puts it on the third finger of her left hand. Says I, 'We're engaged.'

" 'Yip,' says she.

" 'Horray,' says I, and I kissed her. And so we got on. I had only three dollars left before we landed, but I bought her chocolates. But when the boat was drawing into the harbour, she grew pale. There was a crowd of toughs, dagos, and assassins waiting on the boat. 'Moses,' says I to myself, 'this is the place to sell dynamite and revolvers and not ham and eggs.' The reporters were there too, James and Macintosh they called them. And a big man like the Governor of Sing-Sing.

" 'I'm frightened,' says she.

" 'What for?' says I.

" 'Those bad men,' says she.

" 'I'll guard you,' says I.

" 'That's real good of you,' says she, and she took my hand. Didn't I hold her hand all down the gangway, with the captain smiling, the purser grinning, and the chief steward throwing rice on us. And wasn't I feeling happy and sure that I would need never work at all, at all. But just as we were moving off to the hotel, the big governor sort of man comes over and says to her: 'I guess, Lily, the game's up.'

" 'Is this your husband?' says I.

" 'I guess not,' she mumbled.

" 'Are you a real bad egg, too?' says the big man to me.

" 'I'm Patrick Donovan,' says I. 'Son of an Irish gentleman.'

" 'Then what the devil are you doing with that woman?'

" 'Sure and I met her on the boat.'

" 'Lily, have you been putting it over him, too?'

" 'Sure; he's moon-struck and I was feeling lonely.'

" 'Get!' he said to me.'

" 'Who are you?' says I.

" 'I'm the chief constable, and I'm arresting this woman for shooting her husband with intent to kill and running a cocaine dump in Seattle. Get!'

" I galloped back to the boat for brandy."

* * * *

With Donovan for a travelling companion the journey was pleasant.

At each stop our acquaintance with the harvesters developed along friendly lines; indeed, we seemed to have the whole bunch well in hand until we arrived at a place I shall call Nogosma. This was a halting-place for refreshment for the engine and the crew. It was a one-horse town, one street, all the buildings of wood, and the roadway ploughed into furrows of mud. Wooden sidewalks ran along in front of the shops. Chinamen were

the only purveyors of food. Business, as they said, had been "velly bad." The harvesters rushed *en masse* for tea and apple pie. Before the train came in apple pie was ten cents; when the train got in the price was twenty-five cents. John Chinaman is no fool. Neither is the Canadian harvester. And in Canada, democracy loudly insists on a square deal.

The leading Chinaman's shop was soon a bear garden. At first we knew nothing about it, for we stuck to the train; that was our job. The harvesters were entitled to go and get and eat their grub. But we pieced together the following evidence after the day's work was done. Buck Walker led the riot. When the Chinaman asked twenty-five cents for apple pie, he roared, "You yellow-faced bug, you'll get no twenty-five cents from me. Ten's your price."

"No, no, boss; twenty-five."

"Ten," roared the crowd.

"Twenty-five! . . . Apple pie velly good. I poor man. Must makit the profit."

"Ten cents, then," they shouted.

"I canna do, n' fair, me ruined be."

"Bull! Bull! Bull!" they cried.

"No bull! Plentee, Gawd's struth I'm Christian; missionary school me."

"Hell!, you're no good then," roared Buck, taking a whole round of apple pie.

"I killee you. I makit the big shoot," shrieked the Chinaman.

"Shoot! You dope-eyed coon, I'll plug you with lead if you give your snash to me."

"I killee you now," said the Chinaman, raising his finger.

Buck struck him full in the face with his apple pie. That commenced the riot. The Chinaman drew a revolver from under the counter and shouted, "Back you, or I killee you! I killee you! Chinaman very bad man when him angry."

"Rush him, boys," roared Buck, leading the way. Some one hit the Chink with a cup, the revolver went off, then fell out of his hand. They seized him, tied him up, and flung him out on the road. Buck then distributed the apple pie. This finished, they scattered petrol all over the building and set it afire. Whisky found on the premises added to their fury. They streamed out of this building like madmen and proceeded to set other Chinese restaurants and laundries on fire. - The Chinamen fled screaming over the prairie. By this time we were alive to the extreme danger of the situation. The railway people were also worried about an attack on the train, so I told off Donovan to draw his revolver and stand guard. Realising that on foot I would be a poor match for the crowd, I seized a horse out of a livery stable, mounted it, and dashed round the town, arriving ahead of the

madmen just on the eve of burning the last two Chinamen's houses down.

Buck Walker had the Chinaman's revolver in his hand. His eyes were red with drinking. The man was clean gone. I did not feel brave. It was an awkward fix for a youngster. If I failed, the name of the Force would go into the mud. And I had to act quickly. For such occasions a horse is a wonderful asset. The mad crew, headed by Buck Walker, were now near the door of the Chinese laundry. Women were screaming, children were running panic stricken to the other edge of the town. Setting my jaws, I spurred the horse and charged like fury into the crowd. Still spurring him, I made him kick and buck like a broncho. It was not a kind thing to do to an animal, but it had the effect. He kicked them right and left, and knocked Buck Walker down. The mob was inclined to disperse, but Buck rallied them by waving his revolver. Obviously I had arrived at the stage when something more drastic had to be done.

"Drop that gun," I shouted.

"I guess I'll drop you first," he roared.

"Drop it, or I'll shoot," and I drew my revolver.

He fired, but he was drunk, so missed me.

I aimed my gun at his legs and let go at him, also Doc Levine. There was a howl of pain and a yell of fear. The mob turned and flew to the

train, Buck Walker and Doc Levine limping behind them.

"Hands up, you fire-eating hobos," roared Paddy Donovan as the wild crew arrived at the station. The look of Paddy was quite enough. Up went their hands.

"Now, one at a time, on to that train. The man that looks sideways at me'll get a pound o' lead in his little Mary."

They went like little boys. But we seized Buck Walker and Doc Levine. Tying them up with ropes we flung them into the freight car. The bell rang and we went off. And this was my report. By the way, the tradition of brevity holds good.

"To the Commissioner,

"R.N.W.M.P.

"Sir,

"Riot caused owing to price of apple pie. Rioters burnt down all twenty-five cent apple-pie restaurants.

"Riot stopped when Buck Walker and Doc Levine were shot.

"Prisoners bandaged, then roped: Now in-jail."

"C. E. STUART,

"Senior Constable."

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The harvesters were distributed over the province, many saying good-bye with a grin on

their faces, also a greater respect for the Force. But it was not really we who stopped the riot. It was the horse, the gun, and that wonderful red coat. To the man of the West the red coat means much. It means protection, right, justice, and a square deal. Canada has had its share of trouble, but our troubles are really few compared with the troubles of Latin America. Americans, too, never conceal their admiration for the Force. The Americans, I do believe, understand us better than Canadians, especially those Eastern Canadians who for shallow ends would sweep us out of existence. The State of Pennsylvania paid us a compliment when it inaugurated a Mounted Force on our own lines. Other States and all responsible Americans within those States have long clamoured to follow Pennsylvania. But I am anticipating.

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Sulphur Springs.

That was our destination. This was a township in the Rocky Mountains made famous by its warm pools, comfortable hotels, and amusing women. I understand that some railway surveyors discovered the place, just as they discovered other interesting things in Canada. It is an easy place for detachment duty, the Indians being few and other duties light. Of course there are duties, but we had heard that the important duty was to look handsome and intelligent when American

tourists were about. Donovan declared that we had been selected because of our complexions and seat in the saddle. He even whispered that the ugly ducklings were sent to No Man's Land, the Yukon, and the Arctic. You will observe that this is Donovan's view, not mine, and you know that Donovan is a terrible fellow for pulling one's leg.

News travels in Canada, even police news, which is supposed to be confidential. All the characters, and most of the girls, were at the station to meet us. Heading the bunch was a gathering of pale-faced youths in sombreros, coloured mufflers, loose shirts, riding breeches, brand-new riding-boots and Mexican spurs, the sort of men you see on the movies. They only required revolvers to complete the impression that we had arrived in a brand-new Republic maintained by mushroom generals and the force of arms.

"Who are they?" I inquired of Donovan.

"Timothy Eaton's cowboys," he grinned.

Timothy Eaton is the general storekeeper for many people in the East and West. Timothy guarantees to equip anything from a farm to an army. These pale-faced stalwarts annually purchase this arresting rig-out to lend local colour to the magnificent background of the Rockies; also to look *the real thing* when escorting ladies from New York, Philadelphia, and Dakota on hired ponies at a dollar an hour. Unemployed Beau

Brummells and dark-eyed Don Juans find the job lucrative and full of adventure, for now and again a million-dollar girl falls desperately in love and elopes with a picturesque cavalier.

"The girls are fine," muttered Donovan, as we were getting our horses out.

"Yes, they do look pretty," I replied. The high altitude ensured the permanence of a good complexion, while the rare mountain air gave them what our American friends call "pep."

We mounted our chargers and rode off down a pleasant sort of suburban-looking street, then turned into Main Street, the one and only street of the town. At the time I speak of, all the buildings were of wood, mostly hotels, boarding houses, restaurants, curio booths, and shops. At the end of the street we found the small post of the R.N.W.M.P. We dismounted and reported to Sergeant Heavysides, quite a genial old fellow whose long service enabled him to be more lenient to rookies of the Force. He showed us the stables, then our room. In a few hours we were settled down.

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The first duty of a policeman is to know his beat and all the inhabitants. For the first few weeks we therefore concentrated on the psychology of Sulphur Springs. Investigation proved informative and amusing. The tourists came for the

scenery and baths, the inhabitants lived off the tourists. The society bug was in evidence; by that I mean the desire to be known, to be famous, to be big. Summer was the time to get in the dollars, winter the period to cut a dash at pink teas, curling sprees, bridge parties, and balls. There were cliques of course. Our job was to stand clear of cliques and be friendly with all. The looker-on sees most of the game, and the game was amusing. The snobbery of Mayfair was nothing to the snobbery of Sulphur Springs. Every hotel-keeper, store-keeper, or livery-man whispered over the tea-cups—or the beer—his or her connections with the old nobility. If one had accepted all the yarns, then the old nobility were surely as prolific as the sultans and sheiks. This attitude is as true of Sulphur Springs as the brand-new suburbs of Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton, Regina, Toronto, and Montreal. Remittance men have scattered their seeds; younger sons of the ambitious variety have also moved around. Perhaps the friendships, indiscretions, and weddings of these romantic personalities have given rise to the call of blood and the inheritance of snobbish tendencies. But it is surely difficult to reconcile the society bug with democracy. I am inclined to think that democracy can only flourish in impoverished tenements. Once a Canadian or an American gets dollars, there is a

regular scrum to excavate his armorial bearings, lineage, double-barrelled names, and knighthoods from Whitehall. Officially Canada hates and rejects the "Sir," the "Lord," and "Earl," but unofficially they hug these baubles in their souls. We are all snobs.

And one does meet with disappointing representatives of the old and bold. I have found these hopeless decadents standing, loose lipped and demoralised, at saloon bars, mouching like a moucher, whining for drink like an Arab whining for alms. On the other hand, I have encountered in Sulphur Springs and elsewhere men of Eton, Harrow, Oxford, and Cambridge, whose energies and ideals have been invaluable in making this glorious country. One also finds amusing personalities. One day, while walking to the station, I encountered a tall handsome man in rather faded garments. He looked as distinguished as Brigadier Gerard; so arresting was his air that I said "Good morning" and walked along with him. Under his arm was a huge portfolio.

"You are English, I fancy," I said, hungering a little for the touch of home.

"Certainly not," he replied in a haughty way.

"Oh!"

"I'm Irish!" and his eyes flashed. "Perhaps you know the ———s" (mentioning a famous double-barrelled name).

"Oh yes; are you Major ——?"

"Yes!" he exclaimed. "How did you know?"

"I imagine I have seen your photo in the papers in the old days."

"Lot of damned good that is now," he remarked with bitterness.

"Are you farming then?"

"Oh no! . . . I'm a rancher! . . . A rancher!" he replied, still true to the old game of scorning the plough and embracing the ranch. It is the unwritten law that a man may be a rancher without losing caste. (I found out later that his ranch was a tin hut, and his stock five hens, a broken nag, and a dog.)

"Come and have a drink," I suggested.

"I'm not awfully keen," he answered.

"Drop all that rusty camouflage, Major. I'm a policeman, you know. Come and have a drink."

"One really can't hide one's thirst or chronic hard-up-ness. You bally policemen can riddle the sands."

"What's yours?" I inquired.

"Large Scotch and Schweppes, if you're not too hard up," he said with a grin.

"I can manage that," I replied.

We got quite friendly, so friendly that I permitted my vulgar curiosity to inquire, "What in

Heaven's name have you got there?" pointing to the portfolio.

"Portraits! . . . My wife is a jolly good artist, you know. Awfully good at horses, too. In the season we come up here and make a few dollars painting the Americans. I go round looking intelligent and amorous and get the orders. My wife does the painting. Not a bad scheme, you know. Pays the rent, gives us a holiday, and the Americans are jolly free with their cocktails and cigars. One must do something in this damned country."

"Anything rather than work, Major," I replied, laughing.

"If you like. . . . Who the —— wants to work? I don't. It's not my fault . . . you know that."

"Blame it on Sandhurst," I said.

"So I do. Hang it all, we were brought up to do the heavy and have a hellofa lot of side. That game isn't a bit of good out here. All the same, I wouldn't leave this country."

"Why?"

"There are no pickings in the Old Country now. One used to be able to pull off a soft crib in the Civil Service or the Counties. Not now. These blasted Radicals are running the show. The best people at home are now taking in each other's washing. Damned shame!"

"Still a Tory, Major?" I suggested.

"You bet your life."

"But this isn't a Tory country."

"No, but it's a free country. They ask no questions. One can jog along here and die like a gentleman. And when you know them they're really good-hearted. . . . But come along and meet my family."

We went on to the station, and there I found his lady and two children. Pity leaped into my soul when I saw her. She was so sensitive and refined; obviously she was up against the newness and the hardness of the West. But she was brave and had no complaints. I admired her quiet courage, and her flashes of cheerfulness.

"I don't know how you stick it," I said to her.

"Have to!" she replied; and then, looking at her husband, she added with a smile, "He is such a Don Juan; Irish, you know; so we exist on love, portraits, and apple pie. . . . It's great fun at times."

"That's what she thinks of me," said the Major with a grin. . . . "Come on, dear, here's the train," he added in a kind, tender way.

I helped their two dear little children in. We shook hands. As I watched the handsome fellow, and his willing wife go by I felt sorry . . . sorry . . . sorry for the men who don't fit in.

When will Britain reform her public schools?

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Romance is often linked to tragedy.

One day I had been riding over the mountain road past Thomson's Canyon. It was a lonely road, the only houses are the houses of the game wardens. On my return journey I heard moaning in the woods. At first I thought it was a coyote or some other animal, but on listening I knew it to be a human voice. Dismounting, I went in search of the sound. In a little clearing I found the remains of a fire, a tin can, and near by a huddled-up figure moaning. I bent down and turned the man over.

"Mate, I'm done," mumbled an old man. He was tall, spare, his hands were long and delicately formed, and his features were of the patrician kind. At once I knew I was dealing with one of the Legion of the Damned.

"What's up, friend?"

"I'm beat," he whispered. "My lungs! . . . My lungs! They're finished. . . . You're one of the Mounted, aren't you?"

"Yes."

"Good! . . . I know you all. . . . You'll look after me, won't you?"

"Certainly," I said.

"Bury me decently when I go," he said in a calm way.

"Oh, not yet," I protested.

"Sure! It's all over. I know . . . I know . . . I've been a damn fool."

"Who are you?"

"Jim Gordon I'm called out here; my other name doesn't matter. . . . I wouldn't like *them* to know."

"I understand," I said softly.

"Can you wet my lips?" he murmured.

"Surely;" and I stirred the embers up, put on his billy-can which had cold tea in it, and in a few minutes it was warm. Then I raised his head and he took the liquid greedily.

"That's better now . . . I'll sleep."

"Not here," I suggested.

"Where then?"

"In the barracks. We'll fix you up."

"That's good of you, mate, but I'm going. I know it. I'm not afraid, but I wish to God I had played the game."

"You must come out of this," I said with emphasis.

"All right, mate, but go easy . . . go easy," he whispered.

I took off my red jacket, wrapped it round the broken figure, then lifted him. He was as light as a child, and all bones.

"Go easy, mate . . . go easy."

"Don't worry; I'll see you through."

"I know . . . I know," he mumbled. "The police have been good to me . . . good to me." He seemed on the verge of delirium.

I laid him across the saddle, mounted, and walked the horse down the quiet lonely road. Night was falling. The tall trees cast strange shadows on the way. Beasts of the wood could be heard calling to their kind. A cow's bell tinkled . . . tinkled from afar. It was like the far-off sound of the village chimes.

"What's that?" he whispered.

"Just a bell, don't worry."

"It's like home . . . like home," he muttered.

. . . "Are you from home?"

"Yes."

"I'm Devon born . . . Devon . . . Devon. And I'm going home. . . . Is this the old road?"

"Yes," I said, trying to please him.

"Over the moor?"

"Yes."

"I know the feel of it. . . . The dogs . . . yes, he got the brush. . . . Ditched, was he? . . . Lady Joan down . . . not hurt. . . . The bell . . . the bell. . . . That's the village, isn't it?" He was delirious now.

"Yes," I murmured.

"The groom will stable the horse. . . . Call Pendennis. . . . He knows the rooms. . . . I'm going to the ball. . . . By God, she was lovely! . . . She married *him*. . . . Christ! She left me. . . . A drink, mate! Oh, for God's sake, another

drink! . . . The bell. . . . The bell. . . . Is this home?" he mumbled when the horse stopped.

"Yes," I said, lifting him gently.

Donovan opened the door. We carried him into the room. Donovan, good fellow, insisted that it should be his bed. The doctor was called. He only murmured, "It's all up, be kind to him; he will go before the morning."

Donovan and I sat through the long night. We did not speak much. We were thinking hard. All night he moaned and muttered in his delirium; thus we picked up the fragments of a tragic story. The love of a once good man thrown away on a woman who ruined him and married a brute in the county. He had tried in the West, tried hard; alas, he had failed, and sunk into a long life of degradation. My heart was bitter at the wickedness of this woman. I silently cursed the brood. Here was a gentleman choked with vice, disease, and going straight to hell.

At the dawn his hands fumbled feebly with the clothes. His voice was very weak then, but I heard him mutter, "Hold me . . . hold me."

Donovan took one hand. I took the other. The sun was rising and just peeped through the window-pane, lighting up the darkness and showing the painful sadness of his features.

"The bell. . . . The bell. . . . The Mounted. . . . The Mounted. . . . It's the road. . . . A

drink . . . a drink. . . . Lovely . . . she was lovely. . . . Home. . . . The Mounted. . . . The Mounted." Then he quivered, quivered; there was a strange noise in his throat; then all was still.

Donovan turned his head. I coughed to hide my grief.

* * * *

In his pocket we found a registered letter and a gold locket. The letter was addressed:

"The Hon. A—— B——n,
c/o Post Office,
Calgary."

May God forgive that woman!

CHAPTER III

AMERICANS : BOHEMIANS : AND FOOLS

MEN came to Sulphur Springs to ease the gout and see the pretty women, or to shoot bear and get hardened in the saddle. Women came to see the scenery, "do" the tours, and reduce their figures in the Sulphur Pool. And women love to wear the trousers. The grand privilege, while touring the mountains, is the wearing of man's riding or mountaineering attire. At Sulphur Springs one can become an authority on the contours of America's darlings, and write pages on the lovely—and the strange—sights in breeches, puttees, red stockings, and high-heeled shoes. A policeman in these parts must surely place his passions in cold storage.

On station duty it was interesting to watch the crowd arriving. A~~n~~ American business man would jump out of one car; his pretty secretary out of another. "Gee! I didn't expect to see you here," the old gent would say aloud, especially when a New York or Boston parson was about. "But I'm real glad to meet you. Jump right in the auto

and I'll see you fixed up good and well." Away they would go, fully satisfied that they had paid the head tax to Mother Grundy in the form of a North-West policeman, for somehow the American has a feeling that we do specialise in "The Past."

A lovely matron would tumble out next.

"Oh, Sid, it's you! Well, I never! I'm just tickled to death to meet you right here. Why, I heard you'd gone with Gert" (his wife) "to Dakota." Thus was Sid saluted.

"Not this child. I'm doing a lone vacation. Getting fit and fixed up for the winter. Say, kid, I like your dress. It's just prime. Staying long?"

"A month, if you're good."

"Ain't bad, you know;" and he would grin, showing his lovely gold teeth.

"Guess we'd better move, Sid. I see Mother Jennings down there. She's the Pusseyfoot of our block."

"Right away then; here's an auto;" and away they would go as if they had never seen each other in the parlour car, the diner, or the sleeper. In U.S.A. they never trouble about these Foreign Office formalities, but when over the line they somehow think they have arrived in the land of the Covenanters.

Behind them trekked the stern Puritans from New England and Pennsylvania. Tall, spare, cold, dignified, and clean—clean as the brook. American

comic papers joke about the Puritans, but they are the stuff out of which has come the finest presidents, senators, generals, and merchants in U.S.A. We Britishers somehow believe the Americans have no culture or good manners. There is not much in the Middle West it is true. But I always take off my hat to the Easterners *out* of New York, who tenaciously cling to the old traditions of America. And these stately men and women—stately even in their jeers—remind us that we have no monopoly of deportment. The simple dignity of an American lady or gentleman must be seen to be understood. Even the American accent is interesting when they use it, for they always refrain from the crude vulgarities of the cities.

More easy, more polished, more winning is the way of the Virginians, but they live in a sunny land. Life is easy; labour is fairly cheap. They are free of the brilliant but materialistic commercialism of the North, and they have kept their brood fairly good by rejecting the too unruly bounder. Not saints by any means, for the sun always contributes to the passions. Still they sin with dignity and without brawling. One can pardon a straying from grace when it is done without dope, cocktails, and jazz bands.

With a group of lively American girls one finds difficulty in assessing their station and general standing. All dress so well. The rich are jumbled

with the poor. Good get mixed with the bad. The amorous waitress might easily be taken for the daughter of a parson, a president, or a millionaire. The reason is that America has grown wealthy within forty years. The emigrant of to-day is the millionaire of to-morrow. Women from the cottages of Europe and Asia are the mothers of women who rule many of the mansions of America now. There has not been time to breed an aristocracy who will assist the older American families to maintain the prestige of their rich and wonderful country. It takes three generations to smooth out the marks of servitude and economic stress.

Somehow the girls turn away from the gospel of Emerson and Lincoln. The dons of Yale and Harvard are not their gods. Nor do they seem to care that Pierpont Morgan and others have gathered the gems of genius on their walls, so that America might gaze and imbibe the beauties of art and the loveliness of loveliness. But one must be just. Money is made so easily. From shirt-sleeves to shirt-sleeves is almost a faith. All around them is "pep," "bulls," and "bears," and the gospel of Wall Street. The motor car is so handy for pleasure, intrigue, and adultery. Country clubs are more for fun than recreation. "Heroines" are heralded out of the Divorce Court with three-inch headings, and movie offers wired from Los Angeles. At the dance they have to leave their corsets in the ante-

room if they would be popular. If they have no "pep" in the devil's sense of the term, the blasé ones sneer at them. And were there ever such chemists' shops, such ingenious devices to evade the punishment for "week-ends"? The wonder is that they are half good and not mad.

Experience and closer contact tone down one's first impressions. Beneath the powder, rouge, and camouflage of costumiers there is much that is alluring and compels devotion. To chalk all down as mimics of the courtesans would be unjust. They have courage and a fine sense of independence. When they want to, they can guard their chastity with hockey sticks, even revolvers. "Putting it over them" is not easy for the Englishman or Canadian, for they have a nationalism which affects their love affairs. One also admires how they can dance till the dawn, then bath, jump into riding-breeches, and ride the precipices with a carelessness that thrills. In evening dress they do not move with ease, as if born to the game, but they have a buoyancy that is arresting. They cannot do the old-time Cotillion or the Lancers with the grace once characteristic of the ladies of Boston, but at the one-step they win the applause even of the frigid Puritans. And their happiness, though superficial, makes one wonder at times whether it is not better to live on the fringe of the Four Hundred rather than down in the depths of solid domesticity.

For they can laugh and they do enjoy themselves. Life is so real, so full of beans, according to their thinking. What energy they have! They go everywhere, see everything; though they often miss the spirit of the mountains, the people, and symbols of the ages.

This restlessness and inability to sit at home knitting jumpers is also due to the fusion of the blood of great adventurers. America has called the daring and progressive. She has heaped her riches on the men and women who will get things done. Opportunities are boundless. Inventors are welcomed and honoured: Character, be it ever so coloured with Mammon, is to them much better than haughty and unimaginative caste. They are permitted to take a chance. If they lose a fortune, there are other fortunes lying around. Life is a fascinating gamble. True it is often a game for the strong who would swipe unto death the men who oppose them. Nevertheless, America is unique and certainly marvellous.

And it is the game, the strain, the rush and bustle for dollars, pomp, and power, which has affected the nerves and outlook of the young women of America. But on digging deeper still one does find that many hate Mammon. Here and there are rebels who speak for their tongue-tied sisters. Their craving is love, love that is boundless and serene. And they would have husbands who

respect the Ten Commandments. And so I love American girls.

But I cannot forgive their taste in breeches, puttees, and leggings. Chic and delightful as they are in the costumes of New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago, they have surely the worst tailors in the world, if one judges by the fearful things they slip over their legs to do the Rocky Mountains. Just fancy a plump girl in imitation tweeds of half-caste heather mixture, tight, oh so tight! round her hips; slack, so terribly slack, round her bust, and on her feet, not boots but high-heeled shoes, the legs covered with leggings of the dollar variety, which display between the foot of the leggings and the top of the shoes wrinkled stockings of red, yellow, or white silk!

Though educated to the seats of motor cars, street trolleys, and drawing-rooms, they believe their mission is to ride the bronchos of Canada. Wild West movies have convinced them that this is the way to enter the portals of romance. Fortunately the horses of Sulphur Springs can be saddled by infants and led on tea twine. A child of five can lead ten to water without danger to life, limb, or its china dolly. And upon the backs of these noble, bent-kneed chargers, the girls trot and canter before the boys of Great America and Canada. They do believe they are just fine. The only time they blush is when meeting the mounted police

on sixteen hands of lively horseflesh. Still, that is one of the attractions of Sulphur Springs. Naughty old men sit in chairs, chew cigars, and study the contours of these darlings as they wallop, wallop, wallop along the mountain roads. But I wish they would change the design of their breeches, and I hope that *Life* or *Judge* will cartoon them out of jamming red socks and high-heeled shoes into a tiny stirrup, thereby threatening to mangle their shapely legs when the chargers of Sulphur Springs give up the ghost and roll down the mountain-side to the Valhalla of the bronchos. What reckless darlings!

* * * *

Watching the host of American youths detrain-
ing at Sulphur Springs is a corrective to our insular view that we (the Britishers) have a monopoly of clean-cut, public-school looking boys. I had often wondered what the American universities were turning out. My first impressions were decidedly pleasant. Their clothes did not hang so well as I would have liked, but I liked their alert, cheerful, and confident manner. Rowdy in parts, but well mannered as a whole. Having seen the American girls, I was anxious to know whether America's youth were keen on sex or games. I found, as at Eton, there were the usual slackers, long-haired, slovenly backed, nicotine-fingered, and gourmants for Moll Flanders, Don Juan, and

Oscar Wilde. The majority, however, like the good Etonians, had come to mountaineer and explore. Fresh air was written all over them. Their talk was of base-ball, climbing, and riding. They liked the girls, it is true, but the Rockies were more important. I saw five West Point graduates together. West Point, as you know, is the military academy of America. Two immature specimens were disappointing; the other three were magnificent men. But the real good fellows (excluding the Jews, who dislike games) came from Yale and Harvard. I am not so impertinent as to suggest that these universities have a monopoly of fine men. Not at all, for I met a most charming youth from the University of Pennsylvania. Still, I do think the Yale and Harvard men feel they have a mission, a need to be interested in America, and the necessity of maintaining a high code of manners and culture. One can rag them, too. They don't get angry when one jokes about the Statue of Liberty, the goldsmith shop in many American mouths, the little American flags issued with school-books and lavatory paper, and the awful lingo called English—based on “pep,” “hot dog outfits,” “yep,” “sure,” “guessing,” and “calculating.” They take their punishment and can return it. I have little use for the petty minds which demand flattery from British statesmen, writers, and visitors.

"We do love praise," an American has said. Hitherto America has had too much praise. What America needs is a public-school licking. A man who has been well ragged, will, as a rule, respect his parents, salute old age, defer to women, and in war take the load, though it means death, disaster, or humiliation. American university graduates will endorse that. What they are all worrying about is the effect, socially speaking, of sudden wealth and indiscriminate immigration of European types who don't give a rap for Uncle Sam, and who, if permitted, would degrade the magnificent institution of George Washington.

"Why is it," I said to a professor from Amherst Collège, "that these fine fellows from American universities, when they go into business, so quickly forget the playing field, and go in for chewing havanas, shouting for cocktails, ringing up other men's wives on the 'phone, and playing the mischief with their excellent physique?"

"Why do your men do that?" was his prompt reply.

"They do," I answered, "but it seems to me your fellows have got it down to a science. Business and sex somehow hang together."

"City life," he suggested.

"Is it not the tone of the Four Hundred in each town which gives the lead?"

"Perhaps; but feel my arm," he replied. I felt it. He had a muscle like Carpentier.

"I give you no credit for that. You're a professor. I expect that."

"I'm not asking credit, but I'm telling you indirectly that there are men in America who don't give a rap for dope, cocktails, week-ends, or stink cigars."

"But is the tone high?"

"Frankly, it isn't. At our universities we keep things right; they are kept busy. We are all keen on games, much keener than you imagine. And America has given the lead in social work for those outside universities. We have the finest Y.M.C.A. in the world."

"That's true," I said.

"We're not good, I know, but we're not so bad as you think. We talk a lot. We are unconventional. Our newspapers are so familiar with our bedroom scenes. Divorce is lionised by the yellow journals. The cinema, too, has a liking for slops. All these contribute to the impression that we are a race of epicures and Don Juans. When you really know America, you will find many beautiful American families. Emerson is dead, but his work lives. We all remember Lincoln."

"I admit all that," I replied, "but what I am getting at is this incessant mass production of fat young business men who sit in motors, chew cigars,

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hug women with one arm, and sometimes die in nursing homes and asylums. . . ."

"What about Mayfair, Manchester, and Birmingham?" he interjected.

"Admitted, but I'm dealing with America."

"Too much money, that's our trouble. Money burns; there is the root cause. Still, we are attending to all these troubles. University professors are working overtime on a new America. ~~Look out~~, I tell you. We have in being a young Diplomatic and Consular Corps that will jump your pitch. And we'll *make* these fat young men in offices play games."

"How will you do it?"

"Make it good form for a man to be thin, muscular, patriotic, and thoughtful."

"I don't see how you can 'put that over.'"

"I do," he replied.

"Explain."

"The women. They rule America. They are getting sick of jazz bands, gramophones, and young men with old men's tummies. The women have always been better than the men. They made the Pilgrim Fathers. They will save America."

"They must be wonderful," I suggested.

"Sir, they're the finest women in the world! . . . Permit me to introduce you to my wife."

"How do you do," I said, taking the hand of a most charming and cultured lady. Turning to

the professor, I said: "Professor, I believe you now."

"I knew you would," he grinned as we went in for tea.

* * * *

Strange how one finds outposts of culture in the Rocky Mountains. Sulphur Springs, if a centre of gaiety, was also a base for art. The walls of the hotels and picture houses are lined with interesting pictures of bear, moose, buffalo, or prairie fires. The creator of these attractions is a wonderful woman who lives alone in the mountains, guarded by faithful dogs, and using a couple of dashing horses to drive to town. On the other side of the town lived "Carl," the great German animal artist and Landseer of America. A quiet, simple figure with no long hair, velvet coat, black sombrero, patent shoes, or white socks. In appearance Carl looked more of a hunter than an artist. An excellent hunter he was, for I've seen him bring down Bruin like an Indian.

There were other artists, mostly Americans, also some writers. To the town this gave a Bohemian and lively air. And Bohemia often gathered in the house of a rare personality, "Jim the Hunter." Jim and his wife were refreshing souls. Here was a man who lived by his gun; whose life was mainly spent facing death and frostbite on the mountains. One would have

expected him to be almost an animal with the heavy step and breathing of a woodsman. But he was as light as a feather, as gay as a lark, and as wise as an owl. To him came the wealthy and the wise. His man room was a feast of glorious art, beautiful furniture, and wonderful bear-skins. To me it was refreshing to meet the public school making good, also acting as a buffer between the tittle-tattle of little minds and the vulgarity of riches. Jim was a nephew of one of the most famous surgeons in Britain; if you know the man who invented chloroform, you will guess Jim's name.

In this wonderful room I communed with his brilliant wife (from Midlothian), the daughter of a gentleman who was Factor to Lord Elibank. Here, too, were New York ° millionaires. Not those millionaires whose idle hours are spent on divans and in spittoons. But the men whose riches are burdens and who go with Jim the Hunter to gather peace in the solitude of the lonely hills and taste humility out of a billy-can of tea. The *nouveau riche* I have never loved and never will. They are so arrogant. In Sulphur Springs one often met noise coming out of diamond-studded stomachs, and saw diamond-spattered breasts rushing for meals like an ostler running for beer. But in this house only the cultured were welcome. "Otto" (of New York) was one. "Mac," the Irish-

American millionaire, another. The talk was not of oil, rubber, or rails, but books, art, and politics. Hungry as I always am for a chat with thinking minds, this place was a refuge. And it altered my opinion of many of the wealthy Americans. There are a few who think!

It was interesting to see this charming little Scotswoman hand out tea and home-baked scones to men who dined off gold plate when they willed it. All they got for refreshment was a simple cup of tea. And they loved it. It was a whiff of the West, also a whiff of Scotland. And how they loved to roll on the floor with the Hunter's bonnie wee bairns! Surely this was a tribute to the charms of culture, a rare testimonial to the rough-shod, rough-clad man who sat at the fire and talked of books and pictures like a brilliant university don. This was the real salon. The witty woman sparkled all into repartee and laughter. When the time came to saddle the ponies and hoist the rifles they went with regret, for they were leaving behind the charms of a home that was truly bewitching.

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Jim the Hunter and his wife were lovers of the wilds. Out of the mountains, the fierce tumbling rivers, the tall pine trees, and the thickets haunted by bears, wolves, sheep, deer, and mountain lions, they had gripped magic, moods, and mystery. The Old Land called at times; to culture they made

obedience; but the land of sunshine, snow, hardship, death, and wild adventure gripped them tight. To those who only know the lights of London, the tram-lines, and suburban trains, this perhaps is inexplicable. The life of the Old World is so well organised. Nothing is left to chance. A paternal government sees to drains; vaccination, food inspection, right burial, and salvation by instalments. But if our city men could only see the mountains. If they could but spare the time to go with Jim the Hunter far from the clang of the railway engine and the lights of the cities, into the woods, up, up on to the top of the mountains, and then gaze down on the grim but wonderful solitude, the sea-blue glaciers, mad rushing rivers; and hear the grunt of bears, the call of wolves, the crack of the underwood as a wild cat stalks its prey, they would grip the secrets of the wild.

Words cannot communicate the majestic majesty of things. But to the wilful, the thoughtless and neurotic, here is a cure for the ills of luxuries and the ennui of Bond Street. One must be fit. One must be clean. The whole body has to be in tune to grapple with the primitive hardness of things. From the huntsmen, the pack-ponies, the camp fire, the billy-can, axe, rifle, shovel, and riding-whip come lessons that strike home. One is thrust back into the ways of the nomad. Civilisation, so-called, is pushed aside. To live one must stalk,

ride, scramble, hunger, then shoot. The fire must be gathered from the forest. Horses fed from the grass on the wayside. Water secured by bending over the rugged ledge and dipping the pail into the surging brown waters. And sleep is obtained by sliding into a bag and looking up, up, up into the starry roof of heaven.

At night on the mountains the wander-lust is revealed. It is the cry of the soul for freedom and the primitive. The revolt against organised meals, schooling, and bartering. A protest against the vulgarities of riches. The condemnation of a civilisation which herds poor, helpless, hopeless multitudes in slums. A return to the ways of the cave man if you will. *Thank God there are lone parts still!*

From Jim the Hunter and the North-West Police I gripped the lure of wandering, hardship, and isolation. Main Street often called me, it is true. But on my faithful charger, riding alone along the silent mountain roads, I experienced a joy that made me sing—the song of the frontier, the chant of the Legion of the Plains. Here I could brood with the ages. Wonder . . . wonder how many thousand years it took to wear the hills down into a fearful gorge against the sides of which battered the mad waters, uprooted trees, dead animals of the forests, and weak birds blown to death by the fury of the storms! And how old

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were those firs? Those wonderful Douglas firs! Pointing, pointing ever up into the sky. Like spires of great cathedrals. And with such beautiful outstretched arms to shelter those who would know their ways. How one damned the careless traveller who had lit a cigarette, thrown down a blazing match, lighting in a flash a fierce and awful forest fire, thus destroying in a day the growth of centuries, driving, too, before the red-tongued flames bear, sheep, deer, cats, wolves, and hares, scorched, maddened, and bellowing their anger and fearful insolence! This is a sight that thrills and haunts the fancy for ever, but oh! the cost, the suffering, and the hideous stumps and silence such a conflagration leaves behind!

But the glory of glories on these mountain rides was the visit to a wonderful glacier, at the foot of which nestles Lake Louise. Of all the wonders of earth, aye, perhaps of heaven too, surely this is supreme. The gem of Nature, the architecture of God. Hidden it had been for ages until a surveyor stumbled on its beauty and sat down almost stunned with the ravishing beauty of the plan. I viewed at sunset when the sun was falling behind the hills, giving to the glacier rare and haunting tints and lighting up the lake till it resembled a huge saucer of sparkling amethyst. Before me was a tall old gentleman, hat in hand, his grey head like the head of a splendid patriarch.

Truly a noble witness to nobility. He was an American senator.


"This is wonderful," I said.

"Sir," he replied, "this is the handiwork of God."

* * * *

But to Sulphur Springs.

Cases were few. The North-West Police exist to prevent crime, not to make crime. The right word at the right time often saved charge sheets and prosecutions. Behind the official screen we worked for good will and harmony. That has always been the way in the Force. And in this work many a human drama is revealed. The most remarkable case was that of a young Englishman, son of very wealthy parents, who had been expelled from Oxford for unseemly conduct, and hustled abroad to save his father's good name. I shall call him "A" to save the feelings of those who are in the Old Land. "A" was remarkably good looking, remarkably virile. If he had been born a navvy he would have been all right. Work would have cured his evil passions. He was an excellent example of the son of a rich man who is a fool. "A" simply could not carry corn. After three drinks his thoughts were carnal; after five he was truly bestial. But in sobriety he had charm, and a stock of pleasing little ways which attracted people. And his physique made women go after him.



"A" arrived in Sulphur Springs with a ton of luggage and tons of good intentions. He was going to be real good, live in the saddle, explore the mountains, worship the gun and billy-can, rather than the lounge. Alas! there was a woman visitor in Sulphur Springs who had the figure of Sheba, the lips of Diana, and the wiles of the devil. Yet she looked an angel, such a lovely angel. Half the men in the town had dreams about her, the other half tried to woo her. She had a husband, a good fellow in parts, but not of the masterful kind. His love was to be his handicap. If he had only half-loved and half-driven with a martingale, all might have gone well. And he could not drape this houri in silks, or bejewel her head, her neck, and arms. She was so pagan. She loved those silken things which, when wrapped around the corsetless figure, reveal the sinuous outlines that have ever made fools of kings, princes, and millionaires. Her little head was bereft of the alphabet of the kitchen, barer of the Ten Commandments, just packed with "a good time," auto-love, chocolates, and kisses. And oh! she pined to dazzle the world as a brilliant firefly in aristocratic salons; failing that, as the woman who played the devil in a little Western town.

The arrival of "A" was a fillip to her dreams. Apart from that he, like her, had all the signs of intimacy and intrigue. Hitherto she had had to

deal with rather portly young men, with waist-belts round ice-cream tummies, and ten-cent cigars stuck between their teeth. These Lotharios had acquired their arts in twenty-five-cent stores or insurance offices. Good enough game for a lady when finding her feet; but how paltry when compared with a splendid animal, immaculately dressed, of courtly manners, and rolling in "tin." The tin, by the way, does make a difference.

"A" was willing, for his flesh was weak. After a week of the simple life on the mountain-side he hungered for the arms of a lovely one. "B" (the lady) was the most charming visitor within his range. Her eyes were ever turning his way as he passed her pretty hired bungalow. Somehow he always had a vision of sinuous lines and arresting arms. Thus he came, he saw, and *she* conquered. Like the fly he tumbled into the spider's web.

All the sinners in the town started talking; the good people only shook their heads, for I have always noted that wicked gossip is the trait of the wicked. More virtuous people usually have more generous minds. But "B" was impervious to the shafts of those less fortunate in the hunting of big game. She had won the trick. And she aired her hero on the highway, in the lounge, and in his car. From the charmer of drummers and ten-cent ostlers, she had been raised to the "glory" of Queen of the Mountains. From the other ends of

the earth came silks, satins, and diamonds. Out of the depths of railway cars tumbled boxes of glorious flowers and luscious fruit. Furs were dragged from the Northlands. Sweets came in silk-lined trunks from Chicago and New York. All the wealth of England seemed at her feet. She had but to raise her finger and her will was done. So rich was "A"! So willing, too! And oh! and oh! so weak . . . so weak!

"B" split society in halves, for the society bug (as they call it) had bitten her bad. Her rivals mortgaged their skirts and pianos to fill their tables and pack their salons with those who would be loyal to queens opposed to "B." It was a riot of tea-cups, chocolates, bridge, claret, and Turkish cigarettes. And over the cups heads nodded, nodded, nodded hard. How they found flaws in the hair, the face, the figure, and costumes of "B."! But "B" was queen. She had the dollars, the man, and the Rolls Royce car. How petty her rivals seemed when they whirled past in Henry Ford's tin can!

But the worm will turn. Her husband awoke from his dreams. He had tried again and again to get her to start for home, which was in a little prairie town. But no! "B" had quietly made up her mind. She was going to fly, to fly with the Englishman. She was tired of stoking the furnace, whisking flies off the meat, and baking apple pie.

"I'm going with 'A,'" she declared.

"You are?"

"Yes."

"By heavens, I'll shoot you first!"

The worm had surely turned.

* * * *

"It's time for you to quit," I said to "A" in his room that night, for I was having no murders on my beat.

"Why?" said the neurotic one, jumping from his chair.

"There's going to be trouble," I said.

"Oh!" was his haughty reply.

"Yes."

"I can face the consequences."

"You ought to, I think, but it's a pity if a fairly decent man has to swing for shooting you."

"Shooting!" he gasped.

"Yes. Shooting!"

"What do you mean?"

"Her husband means to do it."

"Does he?" and his face went white.

"I would, too," I added.

"Well, let him shoot," he said, becoming reckless and taking a drink out of a bottle.

"You fool! . . . You fool!" I muttered.

"Oh, get out!" he shouted.

"I'm not made that way," I answered quietly.

"I'll make you," roared "A."

"Now, don't be an ass. You know I'm fit, and I want no mean advantage. You really ought to be grateful, but I'm not befriending you because you're a fellow-countryman; I'm really thinking of the husband. You are a rotter——"

"Who's a rotter?" and he clenched his fists.

"You are."

"I'll fella you," and he jumped towards me.

"Cut that out, friend," I suggested, looking him squarely in the face. Somehow his lips fell, and he stood irresolute. . . . The door opened just then and "B" came in, dressed for the journey.

"We had better quit; he's after me," she exclaimed in an excited way to her lover.

"All right, I'm ready."

"There's a train in half an hour," she suggested.

"Good! I'll be there," he mumbled; then turning to me, he said, "Does that please you?"

"You skunk!" shouted her husband, rushing into the room with a big stick in his hand. His coat-pocket was bulging. I knew it was a revolver. When he saw me he let the stick fall and seemed helpless. I felt sorry for him.

"We're going together," said "A," making an effort. "I may have been a cad, but I'll take the responsibility. I will marry her if you will divorce her. And I'll pay up."

"To —— with your money! I want my wife. Don't go, for God's sake, don't! Think of

the kids, the four little kids," and he burst into tears.

The position was tense and awkward.

"It's up to you," said "A," turning to the woman.

Her head fell; she was wavering now.

"Do you really want this cad?" I asked her, suddenly inspired with a healthy idea.

"I . . . don't know. . . . I don't know. . . . I forgot about the kids."

"Do you want him?" I insisted.

She was silent for time, then she burst into tears.

"I want your answer," I said, believing the bit of good that was in her was uppermost then.

"Don't go, dear," implored her husband.

"No, Harry, I won't . . . I won't . . . I have been a fool. I know it now. I was born a beast . . . but I'm feeling wise. . . . I never thought of the kids . . . or you . . . till now . . . forgive me, Harry . . . forgive me."

He took her in his arms.

Turning to the bounder I said: "Get! If you're not clear of this town in half an hour I'll blow out your brains and take the consequences. It's you and your kind who put the name of the Old Country into the mud."

He fled from the room, left all his luggage, caught the train, and was never heard of again.

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I met this couple some years afterwards. They had prospered, and were lovers still. I spent the evening with them. Next morning I found in my pocket a silver cigarette case. Inside was inscribed :—

"To Charlie,
who
helped us in
Trouble."

I'm awfully proud of that little gift.

CHAPTER IV

THE BAD MAN FROM IDAHO

AFTER a few months in Sulphur Springs, Donovan and I received orders to move on. Donovan was detailed for the Yukon while I was labelled for Regina, *en route* to a job on the Boundary Patrol. We were relieved by Paddy Ryland, a rollicking Irishman, and Tom Boyd, a parson's son. Meantime we received a few days' leave which we decided to spend in Calgary, at that time the city of cow-punchers, meat-packers, prospectors, and ladies "known as Lou." The attraction, however, was the Calgary Exhibition, advertised as the finest thing out of heaven and the greatest show on earth, which is the way of the Canadian when he boosts.

"'E never never lies
But he does advertise."

The Exhibition is an annual affair. All Western towns have this yearly parade of fat cattle, thin farmers, and fat meat-packers. It is the annual excuse for a Scots settler recalling the national thirst, and the only hope of a prairie woman seeing

the latest in stockings, hats, knickerbockers, and sewing machines. To the young girl the Exhibition means electric lights, steam bands, fortune tellers, ice-cream, and a mild flirtation. The children of the prairie dream and dream about it for months. Small wonder! After looking at the bald-headed prairie for eleven months three weeks, it is refreshing to come to Calgary for one week. Standing room only never stops the rush.

The majority of the people who attend Exhibitions are simple-minded, naturally happy and easily pleased. The only cute men about are the card-sharper, showmen, or the unemployed gunmen taking the part of "The Heavy Man from Lagos" or "The Living Skeleton from Idaho." The worried men are the implement dealers, who have to sell threshers and binders to respectable citizens recently hailed out, burned out, or blown out. But the sights and the noise drown the worries of the worried. Steam bands playing old-time tunes such as:

"When we are married,
Never more we'll part,
For little Annie Rooney
Is my sweetheart,"

compete with "Hot Dog" (sausage) merchants; these gentlemen keep shouting:

"Hi! . . . Hi! . . . Hi!
Hot dogs for you.
Hurry up . . . Hurry up,
And buy one for Lou."

One never sees such stalls, such side-shows, or such fun in the Old Country. The parents grin from ear to ear, children rattle rattles, babies blow tin syrens, boys march about playing mouth organs, and Jews dash hither and thither wringing their hands and wiping their tears while vainly attempting to find a Nova Scotian who has diddled the old firm of Jakob Catchheim and Allmine out of the large sum of two dollars. Add to this the procession of solemn bandy-legged Indians, hitting the ground with the outside of their feet as they waddle on, marvelling at the madness of the pale-faces, also wondering if it is possible to dodge the North-West Police so as to exchange a blanket, a fur, perhaps a squaw, for a bottle of good Scotch whisky.

By their side-shows-ye shall know them. One sees solemn-looking homesteaders walking into the curtained tent of the clairvoyante advertised on a huge hoarding as :

THE SEVENTH CHILD OF
THE SEVENTH CHILD.

To the Highland, Galician, or Scandinavian homesteader, educated mainly on Mail Order Catalogues for binders, twine, castor oil, and rat traps, the above advertisement is suggestive of

the mystery of the Nile, the medicine man and witch doctor. Ever searching for some secret remedy to eliminate prairie fires, hail, blowing, and coyotes, also buoyed up with the hope of finding a woman who *will* live in the shack, or a man who won't run after squaws (according to the sex of the open-mouthed victim), they cross the palm of a faded she-gipsy with fifty cents and listen with rapture to a tale of the past, the present, and the future. The gipsy, who has learnt human nature in the Red Light Quarter, knows that all require a good dose of magic, mixed with hope, and washed down with roseate visions of lovely brides or bridegrooms, tremendous crops, new barns, two thousand gallon cows, fur coats, man babies, and Ford cars. The Seventh Child of the Seventh Child does no harm; indeed, for three minutes she does tremendous good. At the end of the three minutes the innocents purchase another dose of hope and glory at the red tent of Baroness Simona or Prince Buddha, who advertise in glass cases their testimonials from the University of Win-scon-sin:

But the big show is the goods. This is a combination of an attenuated Lord George Sanger's circus and a broncho-bursting outfit. On a rickety platform stalks a gentleman with hair like Lloyd George, billy-goat like Uncle Sam, red muffler, Montana shirt, riding-breeches, long sheriff's

boots, spurs about the size of the dial of a grandfather's clock, and, in his belt, a couple of nickel-plated Mexican six-shooters. The goods, sure enough. And he has the wily tongue of a circus man. "Walk up," he says, "walk up and see the lions from the jungle eating the dead dogs and dead men of Calgary. Walk up and see the tigers prowling in search of roast beef and boiled ham. See the lovely leopards that cannot change their spots and the monkeys who never use Keatings. And this is the show for High School horses, horses with tails like Arabs, skins like silk, and the manners of ladies. And we have right here the only mind-reading horse in the world. It can tell your fortunes, and, if you give it a carrot, it *won't* tell your past. Come and see the wild horse known as 'the Canadian Tornado,' full of pep and death warrants, guaranteed to throw a man fifty feet in the air and bite his liver out when he's falling to the ground. This horse is ridden by One-Eyed Joe, the broncho buster from Texas. This show is patronised by governor-generals, presidents, and senators. Walk up! Walk up! And for twenty-five cents you'll see the wonders of the world." . . . Then, turning to a cowboy, he would shout: "Here, Jack, keep jawing, I'm going for a drink;" and off he would go, rattling his spurs like a thousand broken tumblers in a china shop. Behind him trotted a couple of young bears in search of "hot dogs."

Other side-shows were

BEAUTY AND ART POSES
ONE CENT A PEEP.

MIDGETS
—
DUCHESS PAVLOVA AND
PRINCE MURATTI,
DESCENDANTS OF
MAHOMET

THE FAT GIRL OF TORONTO
WHO CAN'T GET INTO
A SHOP OR A MOTOR CAR
—
ONLY FIVE CENTS A LOOK.

Most of these side-shows were run by American Jews, so were the games of chance. The Tower of Babel is nothing compared to the cries and yells of these sons of Jerusalem as they shriek or bellow a welcome to see their goods.

But the Exhibition also serves a useful purpose. It is a demonstration centre for the paternal

methods of the Federal and Provincial Governments. No farmers are so well cared for as the Canadian farmers. There are demonstrations on every subject, from the making of cheese to the weaning of babies. The thoughtfulness is surprising. Moses could not compete with the Canadian Government in its desire to shepherd the children of the plains.

What cheers one at an Exhibition of this kind is the presence of hundreds of settlers, once poor emigrants, now comfortable landowners with prosperous families. Canada is no land for weaklings or fools, but for the men who will sweat and toil it is a good country, also a generous one. The man who has a kick against this country is usually a cynic or the man who won't fit in. And I marvel at the stupidity of young healthy men and women remaining in poverty in Europe when they could within ten years achieve comfort and security. The prairies have made thousands rich; better still, the prairies make men good and free. I love the people of the plains.

* * * *

When I arrived at the depôt, Regina, I found old friends: Prosy, Huntley Gordon, Casey, Cawkin, etc., etc. There was a great shout on entering the room, a greater shout when a sergeant warned me for general inspection, musical ride, and stable guard, all in one breath. I was back in

the army all right. However, it was good to meet the boys. And I was tremendously interested about being inspected by the Duke who was Governor-General. My father had known him in the old days when he was at the War Office, and I wondered if the Duke would see a resemblance when he saw me in the ranks. I had heard, unofficially, that he knew that I was a trooper in the police.

I was therefore most enthusiastic about my kit being spick and span and all the metal shining. Secretly I intended to be a tremendously smart fellow. Pride, however, goes before a fall. I did not see that awful joker Prosy in league with the other fellows about a mischievous rag. The barrack inspection was timed for 11.30 a.m. About 11.20 I dashed into the washhouse to wash my feet, leaving my riding-boots and socks on top of the bed. There was confusion in the washhouse which hindered me; result, I arrived back into the room just as the bugle was sounding Inspecting Officer's call.

"Get those boots on," a sergeant roared.

"All right, sergeant," I shouted, dashing for my boots. Alas! I found they had been *screwed* down on to the floor, and my socks were neatly *tacked* down in front of the boots.

"Who the ——! Why the ——!" I roared, absolutely panic-stricken.

The whole room grinned.

"Get those boots on!" shouted the sergeant.

"I can't, sergeant! I can't!"

"Why?" he thundered, his face purple with rage.

"They're screwed to the floor."

"Well, jump out of that d—— window. The Governor-General of Canada doesn't want to see your big red feet."

I jumped, but the Duke saw my boots.

* * * *

On this trip to Regina I had hoped to see Marjory in the offing; somehow she did not appear, but I heard afterwards she had gone on holiday to the mountains. Very down-hearted, I packed my kit and pulled out with Prosy, Gordon, Carey, and Cawkin for the Boundary. On arriving at headquarters of Maple Creek we were distributed to various detachments along the line. Theo Rowton was the inspector in charge; a splendid police officer and gallant gentleman. I was sent to a post which I shall call Shak Valley. A corporal was in command. We had a tin hut, a flag pole, two horses, one table, a couple of tin plates and mugs, a police manual, a Bible, three copies of Nat Gould, one clay pipe, and half an ounce of tobacco. But the sun was shining.

Somehow I had got it into my head that on the Boundary one simply got on the horse and

went round the country endeavouring to look intelligent. I heard, of course, that further along the line there were real bad men from Montana who used to talk about eating the liver of the Mounted Police and potting their eyeballs with bullets. But I did not think that there were any bad men from Idaho. Indeed, I had secret hopes of casually strolling over the border to see if there were any heiresses about. My dreams were ended by a telegram as follows:—

“Look out for Doc Tomson, alias Dick Duggan. Has five stolen horses; intends crossing the line. Arrest at all costs.

“ROWTON.”

“Come on, Stuart,” said Corporal Mead. “We’ve got to get this guy. He’s a hot dog outfit, I know. Got plenty of lead about him. Plugged a sheriff in Dakota and chewed a policeman’s ear off in Alberta. When he sees he shoots. When he shoots the target often gets stone cold. . . . Come on.”

Now wasn’t that a cheerful dish to set before the new arrival? Adventure I had always loved, but I had never loved the prospect of being stiffened by a ten-cent cattle rustler on the Boundary. However, I wallopped along beside Corporal Mead. For miles and miles we rode sounding cowboys and homesteaders about the individual wanted.

For two days we were on the job, then we discovered that he had crossed the line. We sat down and cursed and cursed. After easing ourselves in the manner of good policemen, we followed his tracks across the Boundary. In a cock-eyed hotel we heard from the lovely one, age forty-five, behind the counter, that he had rooked the safe, taken two bottles of rum, and actually threatened to kiss her. She was not pretty enough to offer tender consolations to, and we had much to do. But from her we found out that he intended returning across the line.

"For horses?" asked Mead.

"No, I think it's a woman."

"Then he's sure to come," said the wise corporal, who had promised to marry half the pretty girls on the Boundary.

* * * *

"Say, Stuart," he said on reaching an old trail on the Boundary.

"Yes, boss," I replied.

"You've got to stay right here. Camp there in the bush, hide your horse, keep your eyes skinned and your gun loaded. If you sleep, Doc Tomson is sure to cut your throat."

"But how about grub?" I suggested.

"Rustle for it. There's grass for the horse, there's water for him and you, and over the hill there's a ranch. They'll give you what you want.

I'm off back to wire the inspector. Now get your man if you can."

"But I say, old chap," I shouted after him.

"What?"

"How the devil am I to know Doc Tomson?"

Is he big, has he got bandy legs or a red nose?"

"Sorry, I forgot that. . . . He's six foot two, stands like a ramrod, got hands like plates, a face all pocked, one squint eye, and a broken nose. He talks Yankee, has a bad breath, and if he sees a woman he's bound to go after her. You can't miss him. He's the ugliest — between Hudson Bay and — So long!" and he was off.

The description of Doc Tomson was quite sufficient to keep me awake. No man, not even a V.C., could have slept after being informed that he was to lie across the trail of this bold bad man from Idaho. And I had Highland blood in my veins. My imagination after sunset was always an enthralling thing, especially on a job like this. It was not too dark, still it was dark enough. And I detest the time of shadows and unknown sounds. But I had a gun. By jove, I kept my hand on it!

12 midnight. Crick, crack, went the bush. I started. It was a rabbit going home.

12.15 a.m. Cheep! Cheep! Cheep! Strange calls. A bird wondering why I was there.

12.30 a.m. A light flashing far away. My heart thumped. The Rocky Mountain mail train.

1 a.m. Flashes of light in the sky. Strange! It was sheet lightning.

1.30 a.m. Crack! Crack! Crack! went the undergrowth.

I was now alarmed. This *was* Doc! It *must* be Doc! Yes, it could only be he. I could bet *it* was Doc. Of course it *must* be. Wasn't this the trail that led to the house of the woman he said he loved? I put out the safety catch of my revolver. How I was going to fire I did not know, for my heart was pumping like an engine.

Crack! . . . Crack! . . . Crack! went the bushes. Then I heard heavy footfalls and the noise of sniff . . . sniff . . . sniffing. You know the sort of noise an animal makes when it is feeling its way at night. All at once I got the most alarming bump from a horse's head.

"Hands up!" I roared.

Oh Lor! it was my horse. He was lonely, and had come to look for me. I did feel ashamed of myself. Then I told him to lie down, like a good police horse will do. He lay down, and I snuggled into his warm back and fell asleep. I was absolutely fed up waiting for Doc Tomson. I knew the horse would wake me up as soon as any strange sound occurred.

5 a.m. The horse neighed, and tried to get up.

"Lie down, Jim. Lie down," I said.

It was quite light. I knew he was calling to another horse somewhere near. Looking through the bushes I saw a guy cantering towards the line. He seemed a tall man, with a peaked, dark sombrero. Through my glasses I saw he was not beautiful. But what rather upset my calculations was the black tail coat, the tails of which were flapping in the breeze. That was hardly a kit for Doc Tomson. An after-thought suggested it might be a disguise. However, I was going to hold him up. My hiding-place was excellent. The man was within twenty-five paces before he realised.

"Hands up!" I said, starting up and pointing my revolver. His horse started, swerved, and snorted with fright; he was almost thrown from the saddle.

"You son of a bitch, wot you mean?" shouted the infuriated man.

"Are you Doc Tomson?" I inquired.

"Me! . . . No, you ten-cent policeman. Don't you know Doc when you see him?"

"No," I replied.

"I'm the Sheriff. Doc's over the line five hours ago. I want him for robbery and murder. I have a string of men out. Come on. I'll need you to get him."

"But we want him first," I insisted.

"All right! Get the guy so I can sleep at night. The women can't sleep over there neither. He's a real bad man."

I mounted and trotted on with the Sheriff, a very tough gentleman I can assure you. He was as lean as a pole, had a face like parchment, hands all mottled and sunbrowned, and eyes that could spot the deficiencies of human nature. If Canada has always been well served by the Mounted Police, America has been fortunate in her Sheriffs. On the Boundary there are tales of man-hunting that would make fortunes for the movies. In all these adventures the Sheriff, with a quid of tobacco in his mouth and a six-shooter in his hand, is the most striking figure. But no newspaper would print the language used. It was not blue, it was absolutely red, red as the flames of —.

"Nasty fellow this Doc Tomson," I remarked.

"Yep. Guess he's the toughest son of a gun in these parts. I've shot his hat off, plugged his horse, even hit the gun in his hand, but I've always missed his vile carcass. He's the wickedest lump out of Idaho. The women are just scared at his name. He's the biggest Don Juan since Mahomet. I reckon he's had his arms round half the women on the Boundary. And he's as ugly as a pig with swine fever and the smallpox. Beats me how women fancy these monuments of villainy. Even my missus, though dead scared,

is always wondering what he's like. Time we riddled him off the planet."

"Do you think he's mad?"

"No, just real bad. One of them fellows that can't stay at home and read the Psalms. Scared to death about taking a job. Bunged to the neck with romany lore and the pot and pan philosophy of them —y Egyptians (the gipsies). Can't keep his squint eyes off horses. And can smell his way from Vancouver to Idaho. Gee! he's the blackest devil between the Bowery and cut-throat Montana. . . . Hello!" said the Sheriff, stopping his horse and looking far ahead.

"There's a crowd of fellows over there," I muttered.

"Yep! Guess that's my bunch. Seem busy! I'll push along and see if they have seen the marks of his ugly feet."

"Righto, Sheriff! I'm going this way to see the shack where his woman is."

"Say, that's a good line. Mind she doesn't give you the hemlock, then rip your carcass with a bowie knife."

"I hope not," I answered, smiling.

"So long."

"Good-bye, Sheriff," and I went my way, much amused at the ways of Sheriff Samson, the terror of the border.

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Meantime Corporal Mead had also been busy. He, too, had heard that Doc Tomson was over the line. Mead had also heard that Doc had left two horses in a little gully close to the Blackstone Ranch. From the information received as to Doc's line of march, Mead concluded that Doc was making for these horses. Deduction is a useful thing in police work. So off went Mead. He hid himself near to the stolen horses and waited developments. Nothing happened for six hours. Then he saw the villain coming full steam over the prairie. The pace of the horse suggested to Mead that Doc was in an unusual hurry. The corporal at once decided that he (Doc) was being pursued by the Sheriff's patrol. The game that Mead had to play was to shoot Doc's horse, trusting to an ugly fall to stun the man and give time for reinforcements. All nicely thought out and quite sound police work, but how often the angels seem on the side of the devil!

Doc Tomson was now within fifty yards.

Mead up with his rifle and fired.

The horse staggered a bit, went on, and then dropped dead within ten yards of Mead, throwing Doc right out of the saddle.

"Hands up!" roared the corporal, levelling his rifle.

Doc ducked down and fired his revolver, wounding the corporal in the hand; the rifle fell,

but Mead pluckily jumped on his man, and, though suffering severely from the wound, he fought Tomson like a tiger. But the struggle was unequal. Doc gave the corporal a most fearful kick in the stomach, then seizing one of the stolen horses, leaped on to its bare back and was off.

Mead was unable to pursue for half an hour. He was found by the Sheriff's men, who bandaged his hand. Mounting his horse, he led the American patrol in the direction of the flight. Doc was making for Biddy Ginnes' shack. She was an old flame, also a confederate. The police hitherto had not been able to get her; she was so wily. But fate had surely decreed the end of her fling.

* * * *

"Good morning," I said, on arriving at Biddy's shack. She was a fat old thing, about forty, her face was not unpleasant. In her day she had been the queen of cheap hotels and grog saloons.

"Is it me you're calling on?" was her somewhat insolent reply.

"No, your friend."

"Sure an' all my friends are buried in Mullingar."

"Doc Tomson isn't buried yet," I answered.

"An' what the devil do I know about him at all?"

"Isn't he a beau of yours?"

"Sure an' he isn't," was her haughty answer.

"Anyhow, I'm going to have a look round."

"What do I care!"

I dismounted and went into the house. The only clue I found was a battered photo of an ugly-looking man. On the back was written:

"To Biddy darling.
From Doc."

"Look at this," I said to her.

"Sure that's nothing at all," was her calm reply.

"Why?"

"Half ov the wimen in Saskatchewan and Dakota have a photy ov Doc. Sure an' I'm only one ov the many. He's only a friend ov mine. There's photys there of half ov the men on the range. I can't help the men lovin' me. An' a lone wumin like me has got to be civil to horse thieves an' policemen. Won't you have a cup of tay?" was her insinuating suggestion.

"No, thank you. . . . I'm going to have a look round the yard," and I went out.

At the back was a huge hayrick, nothing else. The outbuildings were empty. My horse had followed me and commenced nibbling away at the hay. Just as I was going round to the front again, quite satisfied that there was nothing in

the yard, I was astonished to hear my horse neighing. A horse neighed in reply. Remarkable to relate, the sound came from *within* the stack. For the moment I did wonder whether I was stupid or drunk with suspicion. Then I went forward. Lifting a hay fork I started heaving the hay aside. I had not far to go till I discovered a door. Opening this I saw a beautiful animal inside. I examined it. It was a horse which had been posted missing for months. Stolen from Grainger's ranch. And never had I seen such an ingenious arrangement to hide an animal. It was worthy of the brain of Doc Tomson.

"The game's up, Biddy," I said on going back.

"What do you mean at all?"

"I arrest you for horse stealing."

"Sure an' it wasn't me that stole it. I'm keepin' it for its owner."

"Doc Tomson?"

"Sure!"

"That doesn't matter. Put out your hands."

"That won't trouble me at all," and she put them out.

I slipped the handcuffs over her wrists, for I was taking no risks. Next I made her sit at the door. I went inside to await developments. Somehow I had a feeling that Doc would not be long. The hidden horse convinced me of that. But the suspense was not pleasant. However, it

was daylight. I prefer fighting in daylight. And the fight was sure.

* * *

When Doc left Corporal Mead lying on the ground he headed straight for Biddy's shack. There he could hide, as he had hidden many a time. The horse he was riding was good but not too good. But he made it go, as we discovered afterwards, for its sides were lacerated with spurring. He knew he was riding for his life. Having wounded a Mounted Policeman he was aware his only chance lay in getting over the border that night. But the odds were against him. The Sheriff's patrol had changed horses at Grainger's ranch. Mead was mounted on his own magnificent charger.

Mead meant to have his man.

A badger hole decided the issue.

Into this Doc Tomson's horse stumbled. The animal's foot was strained. It limped badly, but Doc spurred it on most cruelly, for behind he saw and heard the pursuing patrol. However, Biddy's house was near. Some time later he saw her at the door. But the patrol was also near, Mead heading the van. From the window I had a most wonderful view of the pursuit.—And I raised my rifle to shoot Doc's horse. But this was a dangerous procedure, for the corporal was in the line of fire. If I missed, the bullet might hit the corporal.

And so I put down the rifle and waited further developments.

Nearer and nearer drew Mead. He held the reins in his bandaged hand, in his right hand was a revolver.

At last he was neck and neck.

Mead fired into the head of Tomson's horse. The animal fell, but Doc jumped clear and pulling his gun fired point blank at the corporal. He missed.

Before he could pull again he dropped.

I had wounded him right through the shoulder. Mead had also shot him in the hand.

"Hands up, you black-eyed son of a ——!" shouted the Sheriff, arriving in the nick of time.

Doc put up his hands.

"He's ours," said Mead.

"Yep. . . . You're a darned good policeman. It's up to me to write Ottawa about this show. If we had a couple o' hundred o' your kind on our side o' the line I guess we could clean up horse thieves, coyotes, and adventurers. Shake!" and he put out his hand.

Mead thanked him for his kind words.

* * * *

"Guess you'd better let me say good-bye to Biddy afore we go to the jail," Doc remarked as I came up.

"Don't worry," I interjected. "She's going with you."

"Got the horse, have you?" he said, divining the truth.

"Yes, and Biddy too."

"The game's up, kid," he shouted to Biddy, who had followed me.

"To the devil wid ye. It's bad luck you've brought me," was Biddy's comment on the matter.

"Quick, march," ordered Mead. And we marched them off to jail.

Mead was promoted sergeant. I was made a corporal.

* * * *

Between man hunts the social life was good. Not so polite as in Mayfair, but delightful in its way. Around the post were ranchers and homesteaders. The ranchers were mainly educated Americans, Englishmen, and Canadians. Ranching then was a pleasant vacation. The great rush of homesteaders had not begun. There was plenty of room. Fences were not plentiful; one could go as the crow flies. Of course the ranches varied according to the owners. When a rancher was a money-grubber, only interested in beasts, then his house resembled his mentality. But the majority were open-hearted, fairly well educated, keen on society, and good companions. A policeman was always welcome, for we had a standing much

higher than the city constable of to-day. It was quite a common thing for a smart policeman to marry a daughter of the ranch. A sound investment too. No men knew the country better. None were so handy in dealing with unruly cowboys or cattle thieves.

We had many interesting visitors to the ranges. At one time it was the thing to do to go out West and see the ranches. A Mayfair woman who had done the trip was a sort of heroine for a time. We got a lot of fun watching these pretty darlings moving about the ranches of poor or haughty relations. We also had many interesting visitors from Eastern Canada. The ladies of Montreal, Toronto, and Ottawa often sent pretty representatives to see how things were done. The most interesting of the species was a charming little woman who came from the suburbs of Toronto. She stayed with the Graingers. Molly was the name she was known by. So I called her Molly too; that is the way in the ranches. Molly was about twenty-five and very handsome. She was short, but delightfully petite. Just a pretty little bundle to fall into one's arms.

In those days I was always liable to the June fever, that is, the call of love. In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love. So the poet says. The birds say it too. And I was always in the fashion. Somehow

Molly was rather keen on love-making too. It may have been my red coat; a red coat is such an asset with the fair sex. On the other hand, it may have been the Eton way. The men of Canada, especially the middle-class business men, have not much time for the Eton mode, but the women have always been interested in Etonians. Frankly I think it is due to the feminine love of variety, also to the revolt against the bad tailoring of Toronto, etc. And there are Canadians who have not had the good fortune to get well kicked at the R.M.C., Kingston, or MacGill, two excellent public schools. Anyhow, Molly was tremendously keen on policemen, and I was chosen by her as the representative.

When duty was done I used to ride with her across the ranges. With a charming woman and in a setting sun this is an experience well worth while. The atmosphere is so sun filled and romantic. The Western sky just a ball of gold. It is not too warm, and the pretty shadows of trees, flowers, and homing birds are alluring. The air is still save for the hoofbeats of one's horse. Behind and before is a glorious panorama of nature. 'Tis then man knows the call of the West. It grips. All the hardships are forgotten. One feels partner in a glorious heritage. Couple to this a charming companion and the scheme is complete for all who like the finished touches of romance.

But Molly cantered unmoved across the plains. She was pretty, but bereft of imagination. Like Sheba she had many lures, and like Sheba, when faced with all the grandeur of earth and heaven, she did not understand. Women are nearer the pagan than men. They are ruled by emotions. Scratch the skin and you may find a tartar. Education is not old in our new dominions. The traditions are traditions of the soldier, woodman, fur-trader, and engineer. For fifty years men have been conquering rivers, forests, prairies, and canyons. What use has there been for the Odes of Horacé, the tomes of Shakespeare, and the lyrics of Wordsworth? The marvels that have been achieved have only to be seen to be understood. But pioneering tells on the children of the pioneers. These children miss the discipline of ages. The lesson of an ivied tower is not at hand. Conventions, stupid as they are, have also a purpose, especially in the making of women. It is nice to see women who can walk into a drawing-room, hold a cup of tea, grip at a glance the needs of a guest, possessed of sympathy especially for the unfortunate, and who understands that wealth means responsibilities. This is what I call nobility. It is not the special heritage of nobles, it is available to all. The old pioneers had it. In this rough Western country one still finds the evidence that it exists and can be developed, for suffering and

privation engender sympathy. But the suburbs of Canadian cities either do not or cannot encourage sensibility and responsibility. Let us have a d—— good time! That is the gospel. Why not in the style of the Loyalists rather than the way of the peasants of the swamp?

Molly was of the *nouveau riche*. Still, she had the fascination of the successful. Rude health, amazing vitality, boisterous manners, and generous instincts. To the ones she loved she would give all. For the ones she disliked she had that unutterable hatred which is always the mark of a plebeian mind. Manners were few, the knife and fork sprawled across her plate at meals. She never shut a door. Always half an hour late for an appointment. Expected courtesy but seldom returned the "Thank you" and "If you don't mind" of good society. Nevertheless, Molly could topple a bishop or a professor from Harvard or MacGill. She was such a realist, such an honest pagan, and she could laugh. The world always takes into its bosom the one who smiles. It was her smiling face that captured me. It haunted me. I knew Molly was the sort of woman I would murder for her manners, but her beautiful savagery lured me on. Men are so weak, though we are advertised as strong. But we are only putty after all.

"So you are off to-morrow," I said on our last outing.

"Yep," was the casual reply.

"I'm sorry you're going."

"I'm not. I'm tired of ranching. Toronto for me."

"The lights are calling," I suggested.

"Sure."

"And you see nothing good in this rough country?"

"All right for a change, but I never see the pictures."

"The pictures!" I muttered sarcastically.

"You're moon-struck," was her quick reply.

"No, not quite. I really like you and yet I hate you."

"What!" she exclaimed.

"Just what I say."

"Why do you hate me?"

"You seem grateful for nothing—friendship, hospitality, or courtesy. The Graingers have been good to you."

"I'm good to them when they come to town. We don't make a song about things in Canada."

"You're so charming and yet . . ." I stopped.

"Say it," she insisted.

"Vulgar!"

"Gee! that's awful."

"So you are. It is because I like you that I tell you. You are always late, never apologise, and at table you're just a kid in a toy-shop."

"Say, I've never heard that before. The boys

have always been good to me. Ted Morton wouldn't say that; he's my pal."

"I'm sorry to say it, but I had to. I like you so much. There is something real good in you, and your ways are attractive. I think you want mastering, that's all."

"No Englishman can do that."

"Who then?"

"A Canuck."

"Why, a Canadian would ruin you; he would be your slave, and that would make you unhappy, you know that."

"I know it," she said, looking away and with a suggestion of sadness. This was an odd note in Molly's temperament. I wondered if I had been unfair. Then she brightened up and said, "It doesn't matter."

"What?"

"Nothing!"

"You're funny to-night," I said.

"It's the harvest-moon," she mumbled.

I put my arm round her waist and kissed her. There was no resistance, yet no response. So casual, so careless was she.

"Molly," I said.

"What, Charlie?"

"I believe I'm in love with you."

"No, you're not. You think you are. I know when a man's in love. I ain't a kid."

"But I like you."

"That's different, I guess."

"Anyhow, I'm sorry you're going."

"I'm a little sorry, too."

"You dear girl," and I pulled her near.

"Oh don't! That worries me."

Resistance compels devotion, so I persisted and said, "Molly, I think you and I could be happy together."

"It ain't a bit of good, I tell you," she answered.

"Why?"

"Just why!"

"But tell me."

She rose, jumped into the saddle, then looking me straight between the eyes, said, "I'm married!"

"Why didn't you wear your ring, then?"

"Ring!" she exclaimed with a grin.

"Yes."

"I guess I'm on vacation," and she galloped off, her laughter echoing far.

I watched her go; I pitied her; her laughter covered tears.

CHAPTER V

AT A COWBOY DANCE

(Old Song)

"GIT your little sage hens ready,
Trot 'em out upon the floor.
Line up there, you cusses. Steady!
Lively now! One couple more.
Shorty, shed that old sombrero;
Broncho, douse that cigarette;
Stop yer cussin', Casimero,
'Fore the ladies. Now, all set.

"S'lute yer ladies. All together.
Ladies opposite, the same,
Hit the lumber with yer leather,
Balance all, an' swing yer dame.
Bunch the heifers in the middle;
Circle, stags; an' do-se-do,
Pay attention to the fiddle,
Swing her round, an' off you go!

"First four forward. Back to places.

Second foller. Shuffle back.

Now you've got it down to cases,

Swing 'em till their trotters crack ;

Gents all right a heel an' toein',

Swing 'em, kiss 'em if you kin.

On to next an' keep a-goin',

Till yo' hit yo' pards agin.

"Gents to centre, ladies round 'em.

Form a basket. Balance all.

Whirl your gals to where yo' found 'em.

Promenade around th' hall.

Balance to yer pards an' trot 'em

Round the circle double quick.

Grab an' kiss 'em while you've got 'em.

Hold 'em to it if they kick.

"Ladies, left hand to yer sonnies.

Alaman ! Grand right an' left,

Balance all an' swing yer honeys,

Pick 'em up an' try their heft.

Promenade like cheery cattle

Roun' th' hall ; mind yer feets,

Balance all, an' make 'em rattle.

Keno : Promenade to seats."

From Scarlet and Gold.

CHAPTER VI

A LINK WITH DICKENS

It is a far cry from the editor's chair of the *Daily News*, London, to the plains of Alberta and Saskatchewan. The late Charles Dickens, the great novelist and editor of the *Daily News*, was the father of Inspector Francis Dickens of the North-West Mounted Police. The pen may be mightier than the sword, but Francis Dickens preferred the sword. He was as brilliant in a frontier fight as his father was with the pen that created those immortal tales of London life. Francis Dickens left the Force as far back as 1886, but his work lives on, his memory is green. There are old Indian chiefs, horse thieves, and rum-runners who recall, with a certain amount of pride, that they were hunted by "Good Chief Dickens, nice man, verra brave man!"

Here is a tale, hitherto untold, which I got from an old rancher on the border. There was a bad man known as Tough Johnson, a very ugly gentleman with a reputation for shooting up

saloons, bars, and ranches. He was a most persistent offender in the rum-running business, which was a business designed to fill the Indians with firewater, and in return secure their horses, furs, curios, and all they possessed. Rum-running was the cause of half the murders and petty wars between Indians and Indian tribes in those days. Rum demoralised them. The Indian somehow is unable to drink liquor and remain a gentleman. All the bad blood of centuries comes on top; he dons the war paint, whirls the rifle and tomahawk like a madman, and vows before his squaws and his gods that he will have the scalp of every pale-face in the land. That is why, even to this day, a person caught selling liquor to Indians is sent to prison and punished severely.

Tough Johnson, however, came from Montana. He had been so long in devilry that he scorned the advent of the Mounted Police. He would shoot their eyes out, riddle their carcasses, tear out their livers and give them to the dogs. So he vowed. *Many attempts he made. He riddled the hat of a constable, shot his horse, and galloped away with his convoy of rum. He nailed the ear of an Indian to the pole of his tent for not paying a bill. He potted the nether regions of a rancher for declining to give him a horse, a feather bed for the night, and all the cash he owned. He murdered a cowboy in Montana so that he might have the cowboy's*

wife; he left her stranded on the honeymoon. And down in Dakota he shot up a saloon because the saloon-keeper defended his till. All of these experiences show what a bold, bad man Tough Johnson was.

"I will repay, saith the Lord." Sometimes the Lord came in the form of a red-coated gentleman on a charger. It was the only way with Tough Johnson. He had become so bold that he had organised a gang of rum-runners and was making ten thousand dollars a year. There were Indians who pined for his coming, squaws who waited behind the bush to encourage him by their sweet lips and promises of fidelity if only he would bring the firewater. "Pretty Toes," the daughter of the Blackfeet Indians, was his particular friend and heroine. For "Pretty Toes" Tough Johnson often risked his skin and horses.

But Inspector Francis Dickens was tired of all this. It was against the law. It was cruel to the Indians. This man fouled the earth and all that therein is. Misery, hunger, and madness was his work. The once proud brave Indian race was being hopelessly demoralised by Tough Johnson's rum.

This rum-running had to stop.

Tough Johnson had to go.

The firewater must be changed to cold water.

The Border must be cleared.

Law must and would prevail.

That was the order of the Great Queen.

The wish of all *good* Indians.

The duty of the Mounted Police.

And the task of Inspector Francis Dickens.

The bugle echoed in the fort. Ten men mounted their horses. At their head rode a handsome gentleman of England, Inspector Francis Dickens. They marched by night and hid by day. In time they reached the Border. The inspector scattered six of them for many miles, each man with a beat, all in view or able to communicate with each other. For many days they waited. The weather was cold. Rations rough and horses stamping, stamping to get on. But patience, patience was the watch-word of Dickens.

* * *

"Hello," muttered the inspector on the dawn of a clear cold day. "Looks like him," he said to the sergeant.

"That's him, I know ~~his horse~~," the sergeant replied.

They watched him cross the line; he had three other mounted men with him, also six pack-horses carrying the firewater. On nearing a small creek, a figure ran forward to meet him.

The inspector grinned.

"She's doing it," said the sergeant.

Yes, and all for a pound of pretty beads and the

love of "Big Horse," a half-breed guide, attached to the police, who had wooed her, also won her over in the interests of the law and to please the inspector. But "Big Horse" did not like the embrace which Tough Johnson gave her. It made him mad.

"Don't worry," said Dickens to the half-breed.

"I shoot," he said.

"No, you don't, not yet. We'll do all the shooting here."

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The rum-runners moved forward. Yes "Pretty Toes" was acting true. She was leading them into the ambush. Meantime a pre-arranged signal had sent the six troopers galloping to form a circle, but galloping out of sight. The trap seemed complete.

Inspector Dickens ordered the sergeant to shoot Tough Johnson's horse, three other constables were detailed to shoot the horses of the other men.

Bang!

Bang!

Bang!

Bang!

Four horses staggered, two dropped, one of them was Johnson's. He was unhurt by the fall. Realising he was trapped he struck "Pretty Toes" a fearful blow on the head, rushed to the pack-horses and with a bowie-knife commenced to cut the slings that hold the rum jars, meaning to dump them, mount and get off.

"Come on, boys," shouted the inspector. They mounted and galloped down towards the panic-stricken convoy. But Tough Johnson and his men had been in tougher holes before. They got the packs off the spare horses, mounted and made off, giving "Pretty Toes" a foul kick on parting.

They were making for the line, but half an hour's riding brought them into sight of six more policemen. The scheme seemed complete. Tough Johnson, however, swerved to the west. Three of his comrades were brought down by shooting their horses, the men were then seized. Tough, by miraculous luck, got clear for a time by shooting the horse of a policeman who got in the way. Dickens, however, was after him, and after him hard. Tough knew he was running for his life. He went like the devil and by a stroke of luck crossed the line. He was now in America. Fortunately Dickens had told the sheriff some days before about the proposed ambush. News was flashed to him. Soon after crossing the line, he joined in with Dickens. It was hammer and tongs now, the end was near. After a fierce gallop, Dickens got up on his man. Pulling out his revolver he fired at the horse. It fell, rolling on Johnson. But he was the gamest and most desperate devil of the border. Tough out with his gun and opened fire.

Dickens did not shoot to kill, he wanted this man alive, to hang him after his trial in Fort Macleod, and so impress the Indians.

"Hands up, you son of a bitch," shouted the Sheriff.

But the Sheriff got one in his hat.

"Hell!" he roared, and he let go bang! . . . bang! . . . bang! . . . bang! . . . bang!

With a sneer, a curse on his lips, Tough Johnson rolled over dead.

"Sure, Dickens, that's the best day's work we've ever done on the border."

"Yes, I think it is," the inspector replied.

"I guess your dad would get better stuff out in this country than in those ten-cent saloons of Fleet Street."

"He might," said Dickens, with a laugh.

"Anyhow, I'm glad we've cleared up this gang. There will be peace on the Line for a time."

"I hope so, Sheriff; good-bye," and the inspector rode away.

It was a good day's work.

* * * *

"Pretty Toes" married the half-breed. He convinced her that chewing gum, beads, fresh water, and piccaninnies were better than firewater and the love of the bad man from Montana.

The revolver was mightier than the pen.

CHAPTER VII

QUEER BIRDS IN B.C.

BRITISH COLUMBIA is a good place to live in, also a good place to die in. The climate is so good, life so easy, and what wonderful sport one gets! One can shoot a bear for breakfast, hook a 26-lb. salmon for dinner, bag a mountain goat for tea, and, on the way home, fill one's bag with beautiful apples from a friendly orchard. No country presents such a pleasant routine to the man of limited means who wants to enjoy all the sport lines so expensive in Britain. These conditions account for the number of half-pay officers and "gentlemen in reduced circumstances" as the church magazines put it. Hardly the sort of people to build up the commerce of a new country, but they must live somewhere, so they pitch their camp on the mainland or in Victoria.

To ride about the roads of B.C. or Vancouver Island is as good as reading *Who's Who*. At the end of each road, swinging on short poles, are long, oval-topped, corrugated iron letter-boxes. On

each box the name of the owner is painted. Out of twenty names only about two are not double-barrelled. For these particular parts of B.C. it is essential that one should possess a ticket from Eton, Oxford, the Army, Navy, or a jolly good double-barrelled name like—

Crecy-de Ponsonby,

or

Fitzgun-Bombardo,

or

Percy-Smithnorman.

The rule of "no question" which prevails in the Mounted Police does not apply here. The men are not so bad, for they do get thirsty at times, and don't mind having a cocktail with a presentable representative of tinned goods or napery, but the women keep things up to the scratch as they do at home in the Counties.

Once a prince came to these parts and danced with the beautiful daughter of a storekeeper. At the next official reception the pretty lady was absent.

"Why?" His Royal Highness asked.

"She is not in society, sir," the official replied.

"My car is at the door, please send it for her."

And she came. She danced, and she conquered in the lounge, which upset the wallflowers and caused laughter from the Pacific to Atlantic. The Canadians do love a Prince who can upset tradition.

In the lounge of certain excellent hotels one can meet the women who have ruled at Simla, queened it at Calcutta, and conquered at Aldershot and Portsmouth. Though their charms are somewhat faded through long long years in His Majesty's service, also the service of His Majesty Cupid, they do make a brave show. When they sweep into hotels or parlour cars with the regal air so familiar to levees at Buckingham Palace, the Americans look up and exclaim, "Gee, that's like Old Virginia," while the Japanese porters make a tremendous salaam. And it is no uncommon thing to hear senators and M.P.'s, notorious for their democratic views, saying "Sir" in the most deferential way to an old blood with an eye like Wellington, his pants darned, and only fifteen hundred dollars a year to buy whisky and canned beef. Blood tells even in B.C.

Away down in the valleys, where the fruit trees grow, one can meet the most interesting people in this world. There is meat here for poets and novelists. Byron would not go to Greece were he alive to-day. He would have found in B.C. all the red blood of adventure, the blue blood of "Don Juan," and eyes that have slaughtered the hearts of men in the noble halls of England. One stumbles on links with glorious deeds in war, sorry deeds at bridge, untellable tales of amorous affairs with the women men left behind them.

If ever "Doug" or "Mary" get the tip, about B.C. they will hie from Los Angeles with an aeroplane to book "The Tales of Fitzgun-Bombardo," or "The Confessions of Lady Pompadour-Loveall."

For example, there is the tale of a late Naval Commander, once a most handsome personage, who eloped from Portsmouth with a captain's wife. In the papers of that time it said—

"It is believed the couple have gone to B.C."

Which resulted in the usual official notice that "Commander So-and-so having deserted his ship, His Majesty has no further use for his services."

But the commander was not disturbed. He possessed one of the most beautiful women in England. Unfortunately he wickedly wronged another sweet woman, his wife. His wife loved him. Really he was not such a terrible villain. Had he lived in Stamboul or Arabia his affair would not have fluttered the dovecots of society. He was one of those cabbage-hearted sort of men which the Navy often breeds. As middies and lieutenants they are spoiled in the ports of all countries, with the result that they become weak when face to face with all the charms of woman.

Fortunately he had a little money. The couple, too, had dreams. Their love was so mad, so passionate that they would have no truck with the world. All the way from Montreal to B.C. they lived on love with an occasional omelette and

pot of tea brought into the private room of the car by one of those solemn-looking nigger porters who are so skilled in covering the romances of millionaires.

When the train slipped into the Rocky Mountains they did find time to look out of the window.

"Harold, it's simply gorgeous! It's heaven! Oh, my love, do look! It's the most wonderful place in all the world!"

"By jove, it is some show, Maud! Bear too!" he said, pointing to a bear lumbering up the mountain-side like a fat commissioner waddling out of a pub.

"Excellent shooting, Harold!" she exclaimed.

"Top hole, my dear."

"How splendid! We'll pitch our ranch in the trees, live by ourselves, and have the time of our lives."

"Not a bad scheme," said Harold.

They got out at a one-man station on the line already selected. On the siding they saw the brand-new bungalow and equipment ordered in advance.

"I guess you're the guy that's ordered this stuff," said a rough-looking carpenter.

"Who's a guy!" exclaimed the commander.

"No harm, boss, that's the lingo of the country," he said, grinning.

"Say 'Sir' when you address me."

"That lingo ain't part o' my constitution. . . . Where do you want this little grey home in the West?" was his answer.

"Here's the plan. Up there, I imagine," handing a parchment sketch; "all prepared by industrious real estate men."

"Right, boss. I see! I see!" he said, folding up the paper. Calling his men, the work began. Meantime the lovers stayed in a tent. Within a week they transferred to a palatial bungalow with all conveniences, water, acetylene light, etc., etc. The design was pretty. The furniture good. And the larder was simply crammed. All ordered in advance. There never was such organised love in all this world.

And so they settled down all on their own, he being the hunter, woodsman, fisherman, food gatherer, and lover; she, the radiant mistress of ceremonies, living and working for the hero of her passionate dreams. Of the two she was the most in love. She had often craved for a master, and she had one, for the commander had that way which some women love, but which white men often despise. Still, he had accepted the penalty— isolation, ostracism, and social eclipse.

For many moons, as the Indians say, they lived this life. The white heat of passion went out of his heart, but not out of the woman's. She meant

it. This was the most wonderful life in all the world. But she was not slow to see the cooling of the once tremendous passion. She knew, of course, that the new life was so healthy and so manly; so different to the soft existence of the mess deck and drawing-room. *He was not so puffy. More wiry. Beautifully bronzed. A most handsome frontiersman. She loved him all the more.* Still, *he* was not so loving. He stayed away in the woods so much. *He was always fishing and hunting.* Of course he was *awfully* nice when he came home, but *not so nice as he used to be.* That was the rub. She wondered. She wondered.

Was he tired of her?

Was there somebody?

Was it the girl in the store?

Was it the game warden's daughter?

Was it——?

Was it——?

Oh, was it his wife at home?

When she got to that point she usually fell on the bed and wept in secret. For this woman, despite her fall, was not evil hearted. She had stolen this man, and she meant to keep him though the heavens should fall. She had not wronged her own husband very much; he was a bit of a brute. Deep in her heart she was sorry, sorry for her lover's wife. They had been so friendly. Happy days they had spent together. And she had

wronged her, wronged her. That was the one big and awful regret. At times it was a mountain, overpowering, ghastly, terror filled.

What had really happened was that the good clean air of British Columbia had cleared the commander's brain. The life had changed him from a courtier to a huntsman. He was a man of the woods instead of a philanderer. He became more proud of his body than the satisfaction of his lusts. He actually cabled to London for a box of books, not Bradshaws, Oscar Wilde, or Balzac, but literature. This act charmed her, for, like George Eliot, she too was a woman who was cultured.

Nevertheless he was worrying. He loved the woman by his side, and somehow he now loved the wife he had left behind him. The awfulness of his escapade at times oppressed him; that was why he stayed so long in the woods. Again and again his wife's pretty face would flash into his memory. He would stop in a dazed way seeking for some solution to his worries. There was none. He must live on in the way he had arranged. At times this seemed a punishment to him, for there often swept over him the craze for just one minute in Bond Street, a lunch at the Carlton, a peep at one of the shows, then back to the woods. Then he would give himself a shake and return to be as kind and loving as he could be to the woman he had stolen.

"Harold," she said one night.

"What, dear?"

"You are not the same to me."

"Oh yes, I am," he answered weakly.

"No, my dear," she said sweetly.

"I always mean to be," was his honest reply.

"That's true, I think."

"Don't worry me, old girl. Don't worry me," and he kissed her.

"All right, my dear boy," she mumbled in his arms, but her heart fluttered. She had divined the worry in his heart.

But she never raised the matter again. They carried on in a more staid, friendly way, he with his guns and books, she with her books and household duties. From the summit of passion they seemed to have passed to the summit of reason and compromise. They were not so mad. They were not so silly. They didn't talk about unmentionable things, or retail those witty and naughty stories of the mess deck. Instead they talked about the mountains, the animals, the fish, the trees, and books, beautiful books.

"Maud," he said one night.

"What, dear?"

"You're not the same."

"Oh! what do you mean?" she exclaimed.

"You are more charming."

"How nice of you!" and she smiled again.

"I like your brains better than your passion."

"Why not both, dear?"

"I'm different somehow. So are you."

"I do believe I am."

"Yes, old girl, there's something in mountains, something in books."

"I'm so glad to hear you say that. If—if . . ."

"What, dear?"

"We had not that worry," she muttered.

"That's our cross," he said very quietly, then walked out to the verandah.

Though awfully happy, they never slept that night.

They were thinking of the woman in England.

* * * *

The commander was hunting.

His lady was making the dinner at home.

In the morning she had been happy.

She had been singing.

She had even been dancing round the room.

Life was so different now.

Vile passion had gone.

Something sweeter had come in.

Light! Trust! Fidelity! Truth! Books!

And then she felt conscious of something strange that was going to happen, happen soon. But she stirred away at the pudding.

The dog barked.

The door opened.

A woman appeared.

"Maud!"

"Wendy!"

Then Maud swooned and crashed to the floor.

* * * *

"I knew you would come," Maud said on recovering, and accepting the kindly services of the woman she had wronged.

"I'm not angry, I'm not even jealous. I have got over that. But I have had for long a craving, a feeling that you both wanted me. It seems mad. It is mad. But I've come."

"Wendy, I am glad. I will leave you with him. I will go. I am the sinner. I know he loves you still."

"Does he?" she said with animation.

"Yes, my dear," said Maud, *rising from the bed* and brushing her wet hair back from her forehead.

"But he loves you too."

"Yes, that is the hard part. And I love him. *He is so different now, Wendy.* So nice. So thoughtful. So understanding. The beast has gone. The best is uppermost. It is the mountains, the air, the cleanness of things. And we have been so happy of late except . . . except . . . except when we thought of you;" and she burst into tears, sobbing, sobbing, sobbing.

"My dear girl, you surely have had your punishment living here in isolation. I'm not angry,

not angry, my dear. Why don't you come home to England?"

"I can't! I won't! I don't want to! I love the mountains, for I have been happy here."

The dog barked.

A step was heard.

"That's him, Wendy. Meet him on the verandah. I will stay here."

Wendy, flushed and fearfully excited, went out of the room and met her husband alone.

"Wendy!"

"Harold!"

And she flew into his arms, sobbing, sobbing.

"Don't cry, old girl. . . . I'm sorry. . . . I'm sorry. I never forgot you. . . . We have always worried about you. . . . I expected this. . . . I knew you would come."

"But I must go again."

"Why?"

"Maud seems so happy."

"Maud will never be happy till . . . till . . ."

"What, dear?"

"You are happy too."

"But . . . I don't . . . I don't see a road."

"I do, Wendy. . . . It's the only road."

"What, Harold?" she said, looking up.

"Maud can't go. I don't want her to go. It's up to you. . . . It's up to you, Wendy."

"We both stay?" she inquired.

"Yes, it is the just thing, it seems the right thing to do."

"I would love to stay. I am not jealous now."

"You never were. You were always above me."

"But you are nicer now, Harold."

"I feel cleaner, the cobwebs have gone. It's the mountains . . . the mountains."

"I do not understand."

"You will if you stay."

"I will, Harold. I will. My dear boy. My dear boy," and she fell on his shoulder again.

"Come, Wendy. Let's think of Maud too. I'm afraid . . . horribly afraid, she may be doing something rash."

"Let's go in, quick! I never thought of that;" and they almost rushed indoors.

Maud lay face down on the bed.

The commander turned pale.

"Maud! . . . Maud! . . . Maud!" he shouted.

He shook her gently.

But she was listless.

She had swooned again.

"Quick, dear, let's get her into bed."

They lifted the beautiful woman in between the sheets. She was so pale. Suffering seemed written deep across her brow. The man was smitten with a fearful remorse. The gates of hell seemed to have opened. All the pangs, the pains, and torture of sin were wracking his soul.

"The water, Wendy . . . quick."

"Here, my dear."

"Maud ! . . . Dear Maud . . . do come round. Wendy is not angry. She will stay . . . she will stay too."

The eyes opened. They were startled.

"Harold ! " she screamed.

"Quiet, my girl. All's well."

"I can't go ! . . . O God, I can't go ! " she raved in her delirium.

"You needn't go. Wendy wants you to stay. You must stay."

"I must . . . I must ! "

"Yes, dear, we want you," said Wendy.

"Don't shoot me. . . . Don't shoot me," and she screamed again in that haunting way.

"No, my darling, no ; " and Wendy took her in her arms.

She quietened down.

The commander gave her a touch of morphia to induce sleep.

All night they sat by her side.

It was a strange scene.

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"Yes, dear, I'm much better," she said at the dawn to Wendy. The commander was out in the kitchen then.

"We are all going to stay together, Maud. You will let me, won't you ? "

"It's me who should say that," Maud replied.

"Then I say 'yes.'"

"You lovely darling! . . . It is so kind! But does it not seem mad? What will they say at home? What will father say?" (Lord ——).

"That doesn't matter, Maud."

"I will try to make amends, Wendy. I will try to make you happy."

"That's good of you, Maud," said the husband on entering.

"We're going to be happy now, dear boy."

"Yes, I think so," he answered.

* * * *

"I am glad, so glad," and she fell asleep again.

This was the strange house and strange party that I once encountered on patrol in B.C. I dined with them. My stay was enjoyable. All seemed happy. And all were charming. They talked so well. The house was so pretty. Art and literature abounded. I asked no questions. They offered no explanations, but later I heard it all from a woman in mourning.

* * * *

Vimy Ridge.

That fearful ridge.

That awful hell.

The ridge of death.

The Canadian troops were fighting for their

lives, as well as their country. In battle men struggle to survive, although one never thinks so at the time. It is the survival of the fittest. And the men of Canada were the fittest.

"The mountains. . . . The mountains," as the commander said. And the prairies. They breed *such* men.

Away ahead was a fearful combat. Shot and shell, wounds and death, curses and shrieks, orders and counter-orders. The din was infernal. The line was broken. Companies massacred. Officers dead. Platoons moaning and nursing their awful wounds. And away ahead was a lone platoon threatened with extinction from the advancing waves of field grey and bayonets. There was no officer: he was dead. The sergeant-major was dead. The men for the moment were shaken. But out of the mass of huddled wounded rose a sergeant with blood on his face.

"Stand fast, the Canadians," he said.

The line stiffened at the call.

"Rapid fire," he ordered.

They thundered their volleys.

"Prepare to charge," was his next command.

They gripped the jumping-out pegs.

"Ready?" he asked.

"Sure, boss."

"Charge!"

Out they leaped, the sergeant at the head.

Alone they were, only a handful, charging a regiment of the Prussian Guard. But the solidity, the nerve, the elan, the fierceness of that deperate group of Canadians somehow intimidated, weakened the will to win of the Prussian Guard. The absolute daring awed them, the glistening bayonets unnerved them. The German colonel turned and ran. Men followed. Only a rough handful stood.

Bayonet to bayonet now.

"Ugh!"

"Oh!"

"You son of a bitch."

The fight was the fight of the Trojans. The sergeant was the spear head and shield of a great advance, a wonderful victory.

Yelling, moaning, cursing, the Germans bolted to their lines.

The small band of Canadians returned.

"Jim, where's the sergeant?" a corporal said.

"He's down, Jack."

"Dead?"

"I guess so."

"I'm going back to see."

"I'm with you."

Back they went. They found him. Wounded, dying. Though the fire was awful, the barrage fierce, they lifted him. To the honour of the Germans they let them go. The rifle fire ceased. It was a chivalrous note in a most bloody war.

"It's no good, boys, I'm finished," the sergeant said as they got him on to a stretcher.

"Cheer up, Harold."

"Thanks. . . . Thanks," he muttered as brave men staggered with him down the line.

But at the dressing station he died.

He had honoured his cheques.

There was no overdraft.

Sin was blotted out in victory.

Like Nelson he died that we might live.

And two beautiful women mourned his passing.

Truth is stranger than fiction.

CHAPTER VIII

THE COMING OF THE HOMESTEADERS

IF I were a millionaire I would erect a beautiful memorial statue to the Earl of Selkirk on the railway station at Winnipeg. In letters of gold I would inscribe :

“ Canadians, yours is a wonderful country ; the soil is so rich, the opportunities so wide, but the man who made it possible for you to be here, to get your chance, and to give to your children’s children a great inheritance was

THE NOBLE EARL OF SELKIRK.”

This gentleman was the pioneer of emigration. If ever a god-like soul trod this earth it was surely the Earl of Selkirk. It was Selkirk who saw the wickedness of the Highland Clearances, who rose in anger against the eviction of those brave men who fought the wars of England, then returned to find the glens a weeping, the crofts in flames, old women dying, and young women giving birth to children in the snow. The Earl of Selkirk rose in anger ; he thundered at the doors of the mighty, but he was unheard. Sick of the Old World system

he turned his eyes to the West. He was a wealthy man; his family had a stake in the Hudson Bay Company. Against terrific odds he secured many miles of land around the Red River, then sent out a number of landless Highlanders to settle there. But men betrayed, fools opposed him, cunning traders in Montreal and Fort William hired half-breeds to murder and terrorise the poor, friendless Highlanders who looked for a land of promise and only found anger, treachery, misery, and death. The hostility of the North-West Company to his schemes is one of the foulest stories in Canadian history.

But Selkirk was a man of high courage. He brought another army of emigrants, and hiring a band of soldiers he marched to the West. He avenged the murders. He captured Fort William held by the drunken and brawling enemies of immigration. Later he settled the Highlanders around the place now famous in history as the Red River settlement, the leading village of which we call Kildonan. Selkirk crushed the insane idea that only fur-traders must own the West. He lit the torch of immigration. His Highlanders proved the value of his dreams, also the value of the soil. And out of Kildonan arose the ever-growing ideal of making Canada the granary of the Empire.

But Selkirk, broken in health, embittered by

cruelities and slander, died before he was aware that his dreams had come true. While he is known in Canadian history, I have seen no evidence of public appreciation other than a small, insignificant monument at Kildonan erected to the Highlanders who were so foully murdered by the North-West Company. But there is nothing arresting or personal to this noble man, except old Kildonan; wonderful, it is true, but in these days when all are in such a hurry to make dollars, get married, buy a car or commit adultery, it is surely necessary to halt the unthinking homesteader and thoughtless drummer on Winnipeg station before a monument that shall compel thought, respect, and adoration.

* * * *

Of course there was no railway and therefore no station at Winnipeg in the days of Lord Selkirk. But Winnipeg is the gate of the West. Winnipeg has witnessed the thrilling drama of immigration for many many years. All roads from the East lead to Winnipeg. Here men come with only a carpet bag and in ten years return from the prairie with a leather wallet of dollars, and hire a taxi to drive a new-found bride around the town. And in this drama Scots have taken the leading part. Lord Strathcona needs no introduction. But it is surely time Canada acknowledged in print the tireless devotion of Mr. Bruce Walker, the man who has

slaved for forty years to make the West worth while. A humble servant, it is true, but often the great are humble. As a policeman I have often witnessed his gathering of the clans and directions to the promised land. To those other great pioneers, Sir Clifford Sifton, Mr. B. Defoe, Editor of the *Winnipeg Free Press*, Mr. Drummond Hay, and Mr. Donald Sinclair, I commend this most gracious task. And I feel sure that they will respond. Bruce Walker carries the mantle of Selkirk and Strathcona. Alas! Canada is so thoughtless of those who toil in the Civil Service.

* * * *

The Royal North-West Police have played and still play a part in guiding strangers to the promised land. There are stories that thrill and also melt the heart to tears. The Force is not only a Police Force, it is a travelling emporium, distributing sympathy, information, and affection. To-day, as in the past, when a red coat comes over the sky-line, the dogs bark with glee, the woman puts on the kettle, and the man jumps from the plough and hurries to greet the policeman at the shack.

But follow me through a story of settling the prairie. This is the story of the coming of the men, for the men always came first. I am writing this on the scene, a rich part of Saskatchewan. When I first knew this place, and that is not so many years ago, only a few men and few cattle could be

seen. It was a wilderness. By day the badgers, rabbits, and gophers were kings; by night the coyote was howling and supreme. Bands of Indians passed along. Prospectors passed along. Everybody passed along. We and our land were not worth while. But the richness of our soil could not be hidden for ever. Immigrants were pressing forward. One day there walked into my post a handsome young man, very tall, with sandy hair and *such* shrewd eyes.

"You'll be the polisman?" said Dugal MacPherson.

"Yes," I replied.

"Mebbe she'll speak the truth?"

"I always do, I hope."

"I wass making sure, for I've met bad men on the train who stole my knickerbockers an' the silk muffler that Flora McKelvie gave me at the Ballachulish ferry."

"I belong to the North-West Mounted Police."

"Oh, I wass hearin' of you in Oban. Dugal McPhail wass tellin' me that you men know the land. She'll no be the man who killed the Indian for stealin' horses?"

"No, I don't kill anybody. But what do you want to know?"

"I wass thinkin' of homesteadin' out here. The land may not be good enough?" was his quaint way of asking a question.

"Splendid land."

"But will it be drained? In Morven and Tíree we haf been waasht oot o' oor beds wi' the waater."

"It drains itself."

"I never heard the like of that at all. She'll no' be foolin' me?"

"No."

"But hoo can land be drained withoot stone drains and tiles?"

"We don't have the rain that you do at home."

"I wass hearin', too, that the land in Saskatchewan was not deep, but if it's eighteen inches it will do."

"It's six feet of black loam."

"Man! . . . Man! . . . And what aboot the stones, will they be many an' not too big?"

"I never see any."

"Do you tell me! . . . I have been a damn fool workin' on the croft at home," he added.

"Why?"

"Our croft is all stones; we have built hooses an' hooses oot of the land. The minister says it's just a farm o' rocks."

"We have the land here all right," I said.

"But if there's no rain as we have at home there will be no waater for the coo?" was his next sharp question.

"Oh yes, you get it in the slough."

"But that is not running waater. The beasts must have it out of a river or a spring."

"Some of them dig wells."

"Good enough, but I have no woman to keep drawin' it."

"The men do that here."

"I wass told that the corn in Saskatchewan wass as high as the cemetery walls at home; will that be true?"

"Yes."

"How many bushels to the acre? It'll no' be forty, I'm thinkin'?"

"I've seen sixty in other parts, but thirty is an average."

"Man! . . . Man! . . . An' is the straw good for feedin' the coos?"

"Yes, but they burn it out here."

"Can they no' make it into milk an' manure?"

"They're too lazy to milk and they don't need manure."

"That is not good farming."

"I agree."

"I wass thinkin' of runnin' a dairy, but it will be a long way to the market?"

"Fifteen miles to Bullock Creek."

"That's a peety."

"Why?"

"The milk an' eggs would buy the groceries; that's what we do at home."

"You can make it into butter."

"Yes, but I am not married, though Flora McKelvie was thinkin' of jiltin' Donal McKay, him that's a polisman in Glasko."

"Why not give the milk to the pigs?"

"She'll no' ken the farmin'; we only give the skim milk to pigs."

"Drink it then," I said, laughing.

"We only drink waater at home, the milk is kept for the summer veesitors. But tell me the price o' a bit coo?"

"A hundred dollars."

"An' a horse?"

"About two hundred dollars for a good one."

"She'll no' be able to lend me a horse for the harvest; that's what we do on the crofts at home?"

"No. You will require four or six horses then."

"Will the neighbours be willin' to lend a hand?"

"I don't see any round here," I said, pointing to the silent prairie.

"It will be lonely then," he said, suddenly seized with fear.

"You get used to that."

"But I might go mad, for I've heard that Colin Macrae from the Glen wass chust fair daft wi' loneliness in Manitoba an' married a Red Indian that never waashes her feet an' coorts Colin in bed wi' her boots on. The women in the Glen

are chust mad, for Colin was a good-lookin' man, an' I know he had been writin' to Flora Mackay and Annie Macdonald, her that's a cook wi' the polis inspector in Edinburgh."

"Don't worry about loneliness. I live here and enjoy it."

"She'll know if it's true that the wolves bark at the back door and bite the erse oot o' a man when he's lockin' up the beasts at night? I wass hearin' that on the train."

"They've been pulling your leg."

"But our minister at home was tellin' me that a bear came into Ralph Connor's hoose when he wass a boy an' stole the leg o' mutton."

"That was years ago."

"I'm not sure of homesteading," he muttered, looking over the silent prairie.

"Are you afraid?"

"No."

"Is it the work?"

"No."

"What then?"

"It wass the prices."

"I don't understand," I said.

"I have only five hundred dollars; that will not buy me horses and implements."

"But the land is free," I said.

"Yes, but I'm in a hole."

"What are you going to do then?"

"I wass just thinkin' it would be better to have a chob in Winnipeg."

"Don't be silly."

"It's me that pays," was his pointed comment.

"But look at the chance you get here."

"An' look at the expense. I'm chust thinkin' I would like to kill that man that came wi' his magic lantern to Morven and Tiree."

"Who was that?"

"Duncan Macfarlane, a big man from Glengarry. He had the Gaelic an' wass fond o' whisky. It wass him that told me about Saskatchewan. We had never seen a magic lantern before, an' when we saw the pictures o' the golden West, I sold the big coo, my kilt, an' chanter to come here. An' I don't see any women here."

"What do you mean?"

"He had lovely pictures in his magic lantern of lassies wi' fine complexions, but so far I have not seen a woman on the prairie in Saskatchewan."

"That doesn't matter. You were talking about a girl in the Highlands."

"I have the offer of Flora, an' I can get Bella Mackay if I want her, but I would have to pay the fare. My father wass tellin' me too that it would be better to marry a woman in the country. Says he, 'The coos 'll be strange in Saskatchewan; mebbe Flora would not manage them. Any woman does for the city, but it takes a clever woman to keep a

farm.' " Then raising his voice, he exclaimed, " An' I'm damn sure I'll no' be like Colin Macrae, go daft wi' loneliness an' chust marry a black woman that sleeps wi' her boots. To hell! I'm off to Winnipeg," and he turned off down the road.

" Here! " I shouted after him.

" What? "

" Can you ride a horse? "

" I wass in the Lovat Scouts. "

" Right. Get on to my spare horse, and I'll take you to a friend. "

" I have no friends in Saskatchewan. "

" A Highlander, I mean. "

" She'll know his name? "

" Dugal McIvor. "

" Has he the Gaelic? "

" Yes. "

" Wass he U.F. or Established? "

" Presbyterian he calls himself out here. "

" Oh, he'll do. I wass hungry too. "

We rode together over the prairie to the little town of Bullock Creek. All the way my new friend was downcast, even suspicious. I could see he was thinking evil things of " the man wi' the magic lantern. " And I chuckled inwardly at the thought of this loquacious Canadian Highlander from Glengarry who had been telling all the young men of Morven and Tirie about the lovely women on the prairie of Saskatchewan.

But I was impressed with the young homesteader. He was so shrewd, he knew the game of farming. All that was wrong with him was homesickness and fear of the lone prairie, as well as the need of more capital. My lending the horse, as well as my friendly manner, ultimately won his confidence. Then he asked my name.

"Stuart," I said.

"Stuart!" he exclaimed, his face lighting up with animation.

"Yes, Stuart."

"Is that why you lent me the horse?"

"Yes."

"It wass good to meet a Highlander in Saskatchewan. But she'll no' be a crofter. Mebbe a chief?"

"My father wass."

"Of Glen — ?" he suggested, mentioning a name.

"Yes."

"Oh, he wass a man! A chentleman, too. He wass well known. I wass much obliged to you, too. It is very kind," he said in his soft Highland accent.

My eyes moistened; this was a touch of home.

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"This is a young man from the Old Country," I said to Dugal McIvor, the local manager of a

small branch of the Bank of Montreal, another institution made by Scotsmen.

"Good day," he said in Gaelic.

"Good day," replied the young fellow in the same tongue. Then followed a duel of wits, each man picking the other's brains to find out any defects, so as to be on guard. It was Greek to Greek, and the battle was enjoyable.

"I will not stay. I'm goin' to Winnipeg," declared MacPherson.

"You will disgrace the men of Morven, Appin, Tiree, and Lochaber," replied the banker. "You have the stomach of a woman and the fear of a dog. It was not men like you who raised the standard at Glenfinnan or fought the red devils at Kildonan. When I came to Canada I had only a kilt and bag of meal. Like Alex Macdonald of Winnipeg (a millionaire) I walked from Toronto to Winnipeg. I was half starved, the wolves followed me to eat me when I would be dead. And the Indians tried to cut my throat. But my name's McIvor. I have the strong arm of Lochaber, for my mother was of the House of Lochiel. So I turned and faced the natives, and they ran like the hares do in the glen. I killed an Indian with my hands, and then they respected me. When I got West a rancher would only give me five dollars a week for riding forty miles a day. But I took the chob. And now I am rich. I have a farm, too.

Four sons have farms. My daughter Flora is married to a man who was knighted by the King and lives in a big house in Montreal. And you tell me *you* would go to Winnipeg! I have never heard of a MacPherson who said that before. I am ashamed. My friend here, the son of General Stuart, of Glen —, is ashamed of you too. But I will be a chentleman! I will give you a meal! I will pay your fare to Winnipeg! And I will get you a chob in Winnipeg, too! Alex Macdonald will oblige me. For you are my countryman. But the men of Tiree and Morven are not the men I knew in the long ago. There was Duncan Maclean and Donal Grant who stood by my side in the Riel Rebellion when the half-breeds were killing the soldiers, and the police. They stood when the blood was pouring out of their wounds. When they were dying they told me they were proud to die. And *you* would go to Winnipeg! You are chust a woman and not a man at all!"

"If you will call me a woman again I will chust choke you," said MacPherson, his face flushing and eyes blazing with anger.

"I am glad you show the spirit of your fathers, for I was wondering if you had any spirit at all," said McIvor, round whose eyes were playing mischievous wrinkles.

"I am a man, but not a —y fool. I have only

five hundred dollars. I am in a hole. It is not fair of you, Mr. McIvor, or the son of Stuart of Glen — to say the men of Tiree and Morven are like women. I wass in the Lovat Scouts. I have killed the red deer. I have slept in the mountains with only a philabeg round my shanks. The Maclean of Duart or Maclean of Ardgour could tell you, too. If I had the money I would show you what I could do. I am not a fool. I will go to Winnipeg, and be obliged to you for the chob. When I have the money I will come back and farm here; then I will show you that I am not a woman or the son of a dog. My name's MacPherson. It wass my great-grandfather who killed the Colonel of the Dragoons at Culloden. It was him, too, that helped Prince Charlie when he was flying to the islands. I am only a clansman, but I am a chentleman, too;" and he drew himself up with a pride that thrilled me.

"By God, MacPherson, you are a man after all!" said McIvor, putting out his hand. "I was chust tryin' you. If you had gone to Winnipeg I would have wept for you. I am here to help you—that is my instructions from the Bank of Montreal. And the Canadian Government would be chust mad with rage if a Highlander took a chob in the town. We have made the West, MacPherson. We shall keep it, too. How much money do you want?"

"How much will you give?"

"I will give you what you want."

"She'll know the percentage?"

"Four per cent."

"I will not take it," declared MacPherson.

"But the rate is five per cent. I am giving you the lowest terms because you are a clansman."

"I will not take it," he insisted.

"You are as stupid as the rabbits of Lochaber. I have never met a man like you," said McIvor, getting angry. "But I will make it three and a half per cent.—to you."

"I will not take that either."

"You are chust mad."

"I am not mad. I went to school in the Highlands. I know land. When I borrow I pay back."

"Sure and I know that, or I would never offer it, but you are asking a rate that they would not give to Lord Strathcona."

"I do not care. I am chust as wise as Lord Strathcona."

"You are a hard man, MacPherson."

"I am a poor man and I must be wise in a strange country."

"But I am kind to you. Stuart of Glen — will tell you that."

"I know. I know. And I am obliged."

"Then I will make it three, and I will pay to the bank two per cent. out of my own pocket," declared McIvor.

"I will not take it," he replied, as stubborn as a mule. This battle of wits was enjoyable to me.

"There is no living with you, MacPherson. You would take the porridge out of a banker's mouth."

"I will go to Winnipeg, then, for I would not starve you," declared MacPherson.

"You won't," roared McIvor.

"I will."

"I know what you want. You are here for two and a half per cent. I have met my countrymen before."

"That is true, Mr. McIvor."

"But you are hard, MacPherson."

"The Bank of Montreal can afford a Highlander a bargain. You know that."

"But I will have to explain it to Montreal."

"When they know I'm a MacPherson they will not mind. I wass hearin' that Duncan McGillivray was a big man in the Bank of Montreal. When he was in Morven he had bare feet and slept on straw with the stirks. He would help me."

"But you are not the only poor Highlander who comes to Canada."

"I will take your chob in Winnipeg, then."

"You won't," roared McIvor.

"Then she'll give me two and half per cent."

"I will. It is bad business. Perhaps I will have to pay the balance, but, by God, MacPherson, if you don't make good I will get the wolves to tear your liver out and send it by registered post to the dogs in Tiree and Morven."

"I am not afraid, McIvor," said MacPherson, grinning.

"Then the money's yours. You are as wise as the owls and as sharp as the deer of Appin. You have beat me, MacPherson, as I was never beaten before. Not even the Jews could do what you have done. Stuart of Glen —— will tell you that. But you are a clansman. You look a chentleman, too. And if you behave yourself I have a daughter here that will give you a cup of tea when you come into town."

"That is very kind of you, Mr. McIvor. I am much obliged, and to you, too, Stuart of Glen ——. You are chentlemen," and he put out his hand.

We shook hands cordially, then went in to tea. During the meal McIvor's young daughter was most gracious to the emigrant. He was a handsome fellow, and she liked the pink in his cheeks. MacPherson was silent but most observant. But when tea was over he stood up and said—

"Miss McIvor, I wass a stranger here and you

have been kind as my own mother. I will not forget. I will not forget," and he shook her by the hand.

McIvor seemed well pleased.

* * *

I bought a couple of horses, an old waggon, some camp equipment, second-hand implements, and a new plough for MacPherson. On the way back we called at the only farm on the road, and he bought a couple of young milk cows; then we resumed our journey. After the hard deal with McIvor I was astonished how he had permitted me to buy what I had bought for him without reference to the price, so I said in an offhand way—

"MacPherson, you did not quarrel with me about the price of the horses?"

"There was no need," he replied.

"Why?"

"You are Stuart of Glen——."

"But why the long harangue with McIvor?"

"He is but a clansman."

"I can't see your point."

"He was a servant—he must do his chob; he is not a chief."

"But you have no guarantee that a chief is above suspicion."

"I know Maclean of Duart, and I have heard of Stuart of Glen——. I am satisfied," was all he said.

Again my emotions were stirred. I felt proud of my father.

* * * *

I showed MacPherson how to make a shack of sods, gave him a few hints about how to handle the prairie land, then left him to make good. I never saw him again till the end of the harvest. He was smiling. He had a fine crop, and had paid back part of the purchase price.

Next year he had built a farm-house and a good barn. At the end of ten years he owned not 160 acres but 640 acres. He had an excellent dairy, too. While other men slept or fooled about in winter time MacPherson was selling his milk. The milk paid for all the groceries required for the staff of his farm. And he did not owe one penny to the Bank of Montreal. His farm was known as a model farm. He had achieved success, but was still a bachelor. There were hundreds of bachelors all round him now. The land was crying out for women. MacPherson, now successful, was also feeling the pangs of love. Each time he went to town he had tea with McIvor. Each time he got up he took Miss McIvor's hand and said she was as kind as a mother to him. And each time he went out of the door Miss McIvor sighed.

* * * *

One day McIvor came out to see him.

"You are doing well, MacPherson," said the banker.

"Yes, thanks to you and the Bank of Montreal."

"That is kind of you."

"It is a good country," declared MacPherson, and they sat down on the verandah.

"Yes, a good country."

"Canada was good to the Highlanders."

"Sure."

"But it's lonely."

"At times, yes," replied the banker.

"I have land, cattle, a good barn, a fine house, and 10,000 dollars in the Bank of Montreal, but I have not one thing."

"What's that?"

"Love."

"Stuart was telling me long ago that you had a girl at home," said the banker, hiding his shrewd eyes.

"That was calf love; but she has married a sergeant of the force in Glasco. I have long loved another girl, a nice girl, and a Highland girl, too. She was a fine woman. She knows the country."

"Oh!" said McIvor.

"Yes," said Macpherson, nervously.

"Who is she?"

"Your daughter."

"Sure, and it's not me you should tell that to," declared McIvor.

"Can I tell her?" he declared eagerly.

"If she'll listen."

"I think she will, for I know how she shakes my hand. But I wass afraid."

"What about?"

"That you wanted her to marry McKay with the big store in town. I wass afraid, too, you did not want her to marry a farmer. That's why I have not spoken."

"MacPherson," said McIvor.

"What?"

"You are a fool!"

"Why?"

"That girl of mine has been crying her eyes out for over five years now."

"But you never told me."

"Do you expect me to make love for you too?"

"I was bashful."

"But not in business."

"No, but with a lady. She wass not like the girls in Morven. She wass like the daughter of a chief. She is fine! . . . fine!"

"MacPherson!"

"Yes."

"See that horse?"

"Yes."

"Get on its back and go to the bank right now. She's waiting for you, for I'm sick of keeping that low blackguard McKay out of the house."

He has slept with the squaws. I want my girl to marry a good square man."

"I will go," said MacPherson.

He mounted the horse and rode like a madman to town.

"I have come, Elspeth," he said to a smiling woman in the kitchen of the bank.

"You have been long, Dugal," she replied.

"I did not know."

"I have known since the first day I saw you. You beat my father in the first deal. I knew that was the sign of a man. And you are good, Dugal. You have kept yourself clean. There are bad men in Bullock Creek."

"I wass always thinking of you, Elspeth," he said in his soft Highland accent.

"And I was thinking of you."

"Elspeth, will you kiss me?" he said, drawing her near.

"Yes, Dugal," and she fell into his arms. "It's lovely!" she mumbled.

"It's chust fine. Oh, I have been a fool to have missed all this for years!"

"Never mind, you have made good. We are all proud of you in Bullock Creek."

"And you will not mind the prairie?"

"No. I love it."

"I am getting the telephone in. And I can buy a machine for the electric light."

"That doesn't matter," she said.

"Why?"

"It's you, Dugal, I want, not the telephone or electric light."

"I will be good to you. You will not have to work hard, like my poor old mother on the croft at home."

"I am a Canadian, and like work."

"You won't need to—now. Long ago I thought I would have to get a girl who could do the cows, but I see now she would have been but a beast of burden. My eyes are opened, Elspeth. There is more in life than dollars. I have enough. We shall enjoy it. And mebbe the bairns will enjoy it too."

"Yes, Dugal." And she hid her long-cherished emotions by hiding her face on his shoulder.

* * * *

The old banker was still sitting on the verandah, smoking nervously. He was fearfully excited. The girl was the apple of his eye. Many had sought her, but only MacPherson filled the bill. And the girl loved him. He was true to type, and wanted to see her within the fold of the clan system. And he was hungering, hungering for home. He had waited, waited for this day so as to write to Montreal that he was resigning. Lochaber was calling, calling. He wanted to visit the hills and glens before he died. He wanted

to see the grave of his people, erect a headstone, give to the village a hall or suitable memorial of what Canada had done for him, then come back to the prairie to die.

A clatter of hoofs disturbed him. He looked up.

MacPherson and Elspeth were galloping forward.

"Dad, we've come," said the smiling girl.

"God bless you both!" said the dear old man, lowering his head to hide the tears of joy.

CHAPTER IX

THE COMING OF THE WOMEN

THE men tamed the prairie: the women sweetened it: and the Mounted Police have ensured that sweetness shall remain. The sweetness of things may not be apparent to the cynic or man in a hurry. We have so many of those ten-minute historians that we are tired of them. But those who knew the prairie in the days of rebellion, death, and things profane can testify to the ennobling influence of the opposite sex. That is their function. Women have always been better than men.

In the long ago it was not safe or convenient to have white women in the West. The trails were rough, portages long and arduous, conveniences nil, comforts few, and influences all in league against the part that civilised women are destined to play. This accounts for Hudson Bay factors and other pioneers taking unto themselves Indian wives in a legitimate or illegitimate way. The half-breeds (French and Scotch) are the result of these early affairs. Some of these half-breeds

have names linked with the courtiers of the Bourbons, Tudors, Stuarts, and House of Hanover. Often we see under a blanket a veritable king among men, with the features of a patrician and the eagle eye of an Indian brave. Haughty as the Vere de Vere and proudly insolent when rights are affected.

The Riel Rebellion may be described as the armed protest of illegitimate gentlemen against the acts of those who failed to recognise the pin-pricks of half-breed society. Unfortunately, the half-breed, when he gets a drink and a gun, becomes a Maori, lustful for blood, almost a savage—all of which shows the sadness and tragedy reaped from old-time amours. But the half-breed, like the Indian, has no complaint to-day. He is a ward of the Government, a landed gentleman, too. He has what many of the Old Nobility have no more, a country estate, a pension, a parson, a schoolmaster, also a policeman to see that he is secure in the rights granted by the Great Queen (Big Chief) as the result of the rebellion. Out of the fruits of passion he has gained an inheritance. A half-breed usually gets what he wants. Ask a policeman.

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The first white women in the West were French, I believe, though their numbers were few. The door was really opened by the Highland women

who came to Kildonan. It requires very little imagination to realise their sufferings, also to appreciate their courage; they were glorious women. With them they carried the stern covenanting routine of Scotland, and they saw to it, as the women of Glengarry, Pictou, and Prince Edward Island did, that the young Scots of Canada were well spanked and brought up to respect their elders and the land that saw their birth. In this way these early Canadians had a disciplined *moral*, a spirit, I regret to say, not so prevalent to-day. Ice-cream, jazz bands, and motor-cars play the devil with the race. These youngsters laugh at the old pioneers, and I dislike them for that. But let it never be forgotten that the late Sir John A. Macdonald, the greatest Canadian yet, was a child of the pioneers. He was not born in the West, but he represented the ideals of the women of Kildonan.

It was Sir John Macdonald who raised the North-West Mounted Police and sent them West. He sent them as messengers of peace and goodwill, the guardians of all that is dear to human society. If you know our history you will have read of the wonderful march across the plains, tenanted then by Indians, buffaloes, and coyotes. The police secured the West. The police made it possible for the Canadian Pacific Railway to lay the line. The police co-operated with the men who surveyed

the homesteads for the immigrants. And when this was done, the police guided the men to the promised land.

I have given you a picture of the coming of the homesteader. Thousands and thousands came. The land was settled mainly by single men. Single men are not happy men, especially in lone parts. And God never decreed that the prairies should be empty of women and little children. At last the women came. They brought romance, culture, sweetness, and, now and again, tragedy, but sweetness was the striking note.

Yet they came not to a land of milk and honey, or to the land of their dreams. Women have so much imagination, such limitless emotions. And those orators "wi' magic lanterns" who caravanned Europe, always painted the West as a Garden of Eden instead of a good place for those who liked hard work and desired an opportunity. It takes about ten years to make a Garden of Eden out West. The going is not easy. It is no earthly use saying otherwise. White lies have done great injury to Canada. Remember the Real Estate Boom *and the burst*. And so many of these dear lovable women came looking for the lilies and finding only grain, grain, grain. Buried somewhere in the grain was a sod shack where "Jimmy," "Johnnie," or "Archie" lived.

I have watched the coming, and I have seen

the tears, *but* I always preferred the women who cried on the first day to the women who laughed—somehow, the pessimists were the optimists, the optimists the pessimists. I know; for I've carried them out to the sledge to go to Brandon. A Canadian understands.

The sod shack suited the bachelor. He could run away in winter to California to see the girls. It was only an H.Q. for making money. The land was useful, but not part of the soul. To-day in Saskatchewan, to-morrow Seattle, the next day in h—, and there you have the cut-and-run philosophy of the genial barbarians who in the early days ripped out the guts of the prairie, then hooked it to Seattle, Ballodulish, or Woolamaloo.

No wonder the dear girls cried. Many were so pretty that I was tempted to cry in sympathy. Jimmy, Johnnie, and Archie had become such toughs that they came to the station without socks, string in their boots, the legs of their trousers torn aside by wire and arms spattered with the blood of a calf or cockadoodledoo. Poor boys! They had been so busy watching the price at the elevators that they entirely forgot that those women had for months been dreaming of men in sombreros, cowboy shirts, riding-breeches, jingling spurs, and a horse that leaped over the house—for fun.

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"And this is the hoose?" said a stout young Scotch lady I knew who was introduced by Archie to a "mansion," the chimney of which could be touched from the ground. The inside resembled a dug-out, with the transparent tail of Archie's shirt acting as a window-pane.

"Ay, this is the hoose," said Archie, now afraid of the wrath to come.

"I thocht you tellt me it was guid an' dry."

"It's dry enough when it's no' rainin'."

"But it's rainin' noo, and I have nae umbrella."

"The sun'll be oot in a meenit," he said, looking through the door.

"But have you no' a bed?"

"That's no' a bad bed," he said, pointing to an arrangement made out of Swiss milk boxes, on the top of which lay straw covered with sheep-skins, old coats, and large sheets of brown paper.

"I see! I see!" she sniffed. "And what's the brown paper for?"

"Keepin' me warm. I wrap a sheet roon my feet, another roon ma belly, an' I'm as hot as a hot pie."

"You look it! . . . Have you no' a dacent stitch tae put on your back? Your shirt is a' holes an' your troosers are like Joseph's coat o' many colours."

"Ach! I wisnae botherin' aboot my claes.

I was waiting for you. I have got three thoosan' dollars in the bank."

"No' bad," and she smiled.

"I have six horses."

"That's fine."

"Ten coos."

"My! You're gettin' on."

"Three hundred and twenty acres o' land."

"That's awfu' guid!" she exclaimed.

"And *there's* the plan o' the new hoose. I didna ken if you would like the drawing-room upstairs or doonstairs, and I wisna sure whether ye wid like gas or electric light. Besides, I kent well enough if I was tae get the wrang paper for the bedroom you would raise Cain, so I just left it till you came oot."

"Archie!" she said, smiling.

"What?" replied the droll Archie.

"You're awfu' dirty, but come here an' I'll gie ye a kiss."

Archie kissed her, then went out to get his horse.

Next day the men were building "the hoose."

* * * *

The case of one known as "Algy" was rather different. Algy was so awfully jolly, don't-ye-know, I must own I liked Algy, but he farmed in bed. Theoretically, he was the best farmer between Halifax and Vancouver—on paper. He always got 60 bushels to the acre. His cows were

3000-gallon cows. And his return, according to calculations, would—in the future—work out at about 5000 dollars a year. Algy had been at Rugby, which is wonderful for the making of dreams. He had come to found the New Utopia and do for Canada what Dr. Arnold did for Rugby. Despite his bad farming, Algy was the most lovable and most powerful man in the community. It was his dreams that got in the way of the plough, the seeder, and the binder. Dreams cannot grow grain.

Algy had an allowance from a dear old mother at home. This he expended in an elaborate frame house. He had acetylene light, a gas cooker, an ice store, a most wonderful den of books and pictures, and the finest verandah in Saskatchewan. On this verandah he farmed between discussions about radium, Newman, H. G. Wells, Dean Inge, and the curative values of soda water, feather beds, and electric light.

Where others were content with an old-time well, he ordered an artesian well, a very nice thing, but there was no slough to drain off the surplus water, especially in the winter, so around Algy's farm gathered ice, ice, ice, and in the most fantastic shapes. Horses slipped on it; men cursed it. Women dreaded it. But Algy used to come out and snapshot the fascinating shapes to send home to the mater.

He built the most wonderful barn, with a view to putting Denmark out of business. Twelve beautiful cows were secured, but he omitted to order the bull; this error was repaired, but, when the bull arrived, it ran amok, gored a couple of horses, and threw Algy over the fence. Instead of putting a ring on its nose and tying it up, he went in and got a gun, then shot it. His fencing, too, was rather late in the day, for the cows got loose in the green crop, and had to be rescued from death with bottles of linseed oil poured down their necks. Eventually he got a bull, but all the calves were "boys" instead of "girls," so they had to go to the butcher instead of swelling the prize herd that was going to put it over the Danes.

A practical joker, said to be Archie, mixed corn seed, beetroot, turnips, cabbages, etc., with his wheat seed. Algy sowed it all in. The result was astonishing to behold. Farmers came from miles around to see the piebald effects, but Algy was good-natured, he enjoyed the joke. He took his cutter and swathed the lot down, carted it to the silo, and dumped it in. The result, however, was not unpleasant; it was the sweetest silo mixture in the district, and his cows loved it.

But, as said before, he farmed best on the verandah. He was everybody's budie. The soul of honour, too, and never did a mean thing. Being

the only educated man about he was the big chief, adviser, physician, and friend. He stood between the illiterate farmers and Jack Slimy, the lawyer, who was always trying to foreclose a mortgage and put hard-working men out of business. He often sent telegrams to Regina and Ottawa saying that if they didn't get the railway in, start an experimental farm; hire out bulls and stallions, send prize poultry, and organise lectures for farmers, he would write to the *Times*, start a new Farmers' Party, and so put out of business all those K.C.'s who depend on Parliament for honours and jobs. In this way he became a sort of character, and was forgiven for bad farming, even by the politicians.

But his adventures cost cash; he had to borrow heavily from the bank. But Algy was so nice, so awfully jolly, don't-ye-know, that not even the banker, the Massey Harris man, or store-keeper refused him. True, they all worried about their money, but they knew he would not quit, and it would be all right in the end. But Jack Slimy meant to have him by the neck. Algy had put the lid on his (Slimy's) aspirations to become M.P. Algy was now at the last gasp. If he did not get a good crop he would be down and out. So I went to the "boys" and said, "Look here, you've got to get this good fellow out of a hole."

"Sure," they said.

"Well, now, why not keep Algy on his verandah—or on his bed—and muster all the boys with their gear for the seeding, rolling, and harrowing."

"Yep," said George Bland, an American and splendid farmer.

"All right; you take the lead and organise the teams," I said to Bland.

"Sure!" was the shout of all.

There was never seen in all Saskatchewan such industry round Algy's farm. From his verandah he saw an army of horses and machinery advancing.

"What's up?" he said to the American.

"You've got to stay right there," pointing to the verandah. "You can chew away with Horace and Aristotle. We're going to put this crop right in. Get!"

"Awfully good of you. I know I'm a bally ass at this business; but I'll make the dinner."

It was a jolly good dinner, too. They worked at the job for a week. And when the harvest came, Algy, like the others, had a bumper crop. He paid his debts. Slimy fled from the district.

But his real salvation was a beautiful girl from Montreal. Oh, she was lovely! A perfect lady, too. She had tumbled into our town with her dad, a well-known statesman. He was touring the district. Algy's was the only decent house

where he could stay and be entertained. While the dear old man was touring the prairie, holding forth on the coming of joy to the land of sod shacks and canned beef, Algy was making desperate love to the dear girl: The courtship lasted a fortnight. When the old gentleman announced their departure, up jumped the girl and said —

"Dad, I'm going to stay right here."

"What!" he exclaimed.

"We are thinking, sir, of getting married — with your permission, of course. I am afraid you may think me awfully mean making love to your daughter while she was my guest, but I really couldn't help it."

"You young blackguard!" he exclaimed, half angry, half amused.

"He isn't, dad; he's just a real nice boy. You've got to wire mum in Montreal to come on here so we can get married."

"Well!" he gasped.

"Sure!" said the pretty one, who knew her own mind.

"But your haste is indecent," he protested.

"Now, dad, don't say that, for you met mum at a dance in Toronto and you ran away the next day."

"But that was in the old days."

"Love's just the same disease as when you were a boy."

"Your mother will be furious."

"She won't when she sees the dear boy. Now, dad, please send the wire," and she put her lovely arms around his neck.

"All right! all right!" he mumbled, wiping his eyes, for she was his only daughter. Still, he was not blind to the real virtues of Algy. He had heard all about him. So the wire was sent.

The mother arrived from Montreal in a furious temper. She had visions of her own. There was a young man who was destined to be one of the biggest business guns in Canada. This gentleman had been marked down for her own dear girl. And here she was going to marry "a fool Englishman in the prairie."

"Hello, mum," said the pretty one, giving her a kiss.

The mother's kiss was frigid and formal.

"Here's Algy," she announced.

"I am so glad to meet you, Mrs. —," said the courtly one.

"I am rather aston——" Then she stopped. Somehow Algy was so handsome, so manly, so happy looking, obviously a gentleman, and she recalled her own adventure. "I meant to be rude," she continued, "but I've got to laugh," and she smiled like a babe.

"It's all right, mum," said the pretty one,

squeezing her arm and wiping emotion out of her eyes.

"Yes, I think it is," said the mother, quite sure now all was in order.

But the dear old father was upon the farm, pacing the verandah nervously. He was afraid of a fearful storm. And he wondered what Society would say in Montreal. He knew his wife had other visions too. At the moment he regretted this expedition to see the land of bachelors, sod shacks, and canned beef.

"Hello!" he muttered, "here they are!" and he braced himself for a real dust-up.

Algy's team stopped at the verandah.

"It's all right, dad. We've won," said the pretty one.

"Thank God!" exclaimed the perspiring statesman on viewing his wife all smiles.

He kissed her affectionately, then they all went in to tea, which Algy and his pretty one had prepared. During the meal the mother was astonished at her surroundings. Such a nice Chesterfield! What a pretty carpet! And the lovely bookcase! Good old Rugby armchairs! Gas too! A cooking-stove! Ice house! Fly screens! And the verandah! That wonderful verandah!

Algy's taste was delightful.

* * * *

"Guess we'd better talk things out," said the

old gentleman, pushing back his chair at the end of the meal.

"Yes, certainly," replied the courteous youth, offering a good cigar.

"What's your bank balance?"

"Not a bean," said the honest lover.

"Gee! And you want to get married!"

"I've got this farm, the house, and the crop this year cleared the mortgage. From my mother I get a thousand dollars a year."

"But that won't keep a young woman with very expensive tastes," the father said.

"Yes, it will, dad. One doesn't need so many pretty things out here," the girl interjected.

"You can't live on love, my dear," her mother remarked.

"We can live on a thousand dollars all right."

"You can pig it out on that," the old man said.

"But, dad, there's the farm."

"I know all about the farm," he said, with a grin on his face. "Algy is most charming; all love him in the district. But even he will own that he has been farming on his verandah."

"I have so much to do for the people, you know. I like to help them; they are very kind to me."

"You're too good-hearted, my boy; all the same, that's why I like you. What you need is

a girl with a head on. That's the girl all right," he said, pointing to his daughter. "But it's up to me to get things ship-shape. I'm her father, you will understand."

"Certainly, sir."

"What's your valuation of the land and homestead?"

"About twenty thousand dollars."

"Right. Are you willing to sell?"

"Not exactly."

"I put it this way: if I pay you twenty thousand dollars for the farm and put that money into the bank in your name, then hand over the deeds to the girl, are you agreeable?"

"Well . . . yes. I think I see what you're getting at. It is generous and makes things sure."

"Certainly. And if I may suggest it, let Margaret run the farm. I mean the books, the details, the little things that mean so much."

"Of course. I am only too willing. I know I am not a bit of good at detail. After all, I'm not a selfish person. Margaret, apart from being a most kind and charming girl, will be a godsend. We can be happy here. I love the prairie."

"So do I," chimed in the beaming Margaret.

"So we are all happy again," said ma.

"Right," said the father. Then, turning to Algy, he said, "Have you a 'phone?"

"Oh yes."

"Ring up and tell the parson to come right here. We'll pay him a hundred-dollar fee."

"Dad, you're just a darling!" And the girl threw her arms around his neck.

This was the happiest marriage in the district.

* * * *

"Otto," a German in the district, went about matrimony in another manner. He was a good farmer, but a realist. Like many Germans, he believed a woman was designed as a housekeeper, child bearer, and general beast of burden. There was not an ounce of chivalry in his soul. It was not love that smote him, but the need of a partner who would ease his lusts, do the drudgery, and help to pile up the dollars. So "Otto" advertised in a home paper in Germany, at the same time asking for photographs of those who applied.

Going over the pictures he decided on a very healthy specimen; sent off the passage money, also money for her kit. In due course the girl arrived. I saw her getting out of the railway car. She was a typical German peasant, broad, full-busted, strong, with a good skin, but those dull eyes which suggest a darkened intellect and years of feudal repression.

"Gretchen, ha!" and he kissed her great

lips, the crack of the kiss sounding like a gun shot. "Goot! . . . Goot!" he said, surveying her in the same way a butcher looks at an animal for the Christmas market.

"Come! We will go to the shack," he said.

She lifted her two big canvas bags and followed him like a beautiful blonde beast following its owner. Otto passed out of the station smoking his pipe, so very proud of his first prize in the cattle market. To him all women were cattle. I watched them go, the woman dumb and overawed, and hobbling awkwardly with her load. I could stand it no longer, so I mounted my horse and rode after him.

"Look here, Otto, why don't you carry the girl's bags?"

"Bah! She German woman. Peasant. She like work. Goot, eh?" and he slapped her on the back.

"Get the hold of those bags," I said to him, looking down into his red, brutal eyes.

"It is my beesness," he roared.

"Get the hold of those bags. This is Canada. Women are women here, not brutes."

"Bah!" he roared, seizing the bags.

The girl, tired with a long train journey, looked up at me with a dumb thankfulness, also a sense of mystery. No doubt she thought it strange that a policeman should make man subservient

according to her peasant code. However, I was convinced that the poor girl realised she was in a country where even "Otto" could not beat her as a dog.

"Stuart," said the German pastor, who had witnessed the scene, "I am ashamed of my countryman. That was good. That was kind. It will frighten Otto. He is no good. I thank you. I thank you." And he went his way.

* * * *

The coming of the women was in its way a great romance. It was a stage in history, a thrilling drama too, for the coming was pregnant with possibilities of wondrous things for this wonderful country. I watched the coming with jealous interest: this land was so dear to me. It seemed my own. In forty years it had leaped from savagery to civilisation. The story of Japan is fascinating, the story of the West is more than that; it is thrilling, and I was proud of the part the Mounted Police had played and still plays. But many of the tasks of civilisation were now passing out of the hands of policemen into the hands of the women. We had kept the men as good as men can be kept in a pioneering country. To the women we were imperceptibly handing power and the keys of immortality.

And so I watched them. Few were beautiful,

for those who toil have the marks of strain and economic stress. Some were weak, some were foolish, some were bad, and some were mad. But the great majority were brave, temperate, willing, kind, and true. To their surprise they found that virtue is possible and is safeguarded. These broad prairie lands somehow do not react to sensation, dope, distemper, or jazz bands. The soil is so fresh, the air so pure, and the sun so bright. There is so much to be done. Nature punishes the man who forgets the harrow, the grubber, or the hoe. There are horses to fondle, love, and admire. Little calves that frisk around and ever raise a smile. And the dogs are so gentle and confiding, rubbing their old heads into one's hands. The little gopher plays in the furrow and on the road. The rabbit bobs in and out. And up in the sky the birds sing their old sweet songs. Above all, the air is life-giving, so bracing, so full of health, power, and freedom, that the rubbish of the soul gives way to the charms of nobility. There is something on these prairies, bald as they are, wind-swept too, yet fascinating withal. One who has lived here for only three years never desires to go home.

This is no cheap boost, for I detest the tricks of the bagman. I would not proclaim that all is well in the land of the West. The West is the same as the East, the same as the Old World ;

by that I mean that wherever human beings gather there are problems, there are sorrows. When critics grip that, then all is well. And those Canadians who bite their nails with rage when Canada is criticised are foolish indeed. Their country can stand criticism. But a new land is so sensitive, its people so bent on its future, that they are intolerant of pleasant chaff or a friendly and useful jibe. That is the way of all our Dominions. It has been the cause of recalling pro-Consuls, also the reviling of journals and writers, but we must be patient, patient. They are young. When they have ivy on the homes of Canada they will repent and make amends.

The women reformed a land of sod shacks, canned beef, and domestic smells to a land of frame houses, pretty gardens, warm kitchens, airy bedrooms, and all those touches which make home so dear. Women enthuse, women inspire. While they were willing to suffer and take the share of the burden, they decreed that while there was wood, paint, iron, steel, lamps, chairs, and beds in the world, there was no need of suffering needlessly. The men had to shave, the men had to bath, if only in the slough. The washing rope went up on the green, and on Monday the shirts, pants, aprons, and table-cloths cracked in the breeze.

Meals were not cold or an affair of canned

beef, black tea, and horrible bread. On the range sizzled steak, ham, eggs, and fried potatoes. The plates were warmed, the cloth was clean, the knives and forks as bright as we have in hotels. So when the tired men came home from the hard toil of the land here was home, here was woman maternal, kind, and true.

I have enjoyed their simple hospitality. At the meals with those rough-looking hired men I have never heard a foul jest or low inuendo. This is no plea that these men are gods, not at all. But out on the prairie there is a law that a man who fouls his nest shall be scorned and banned.

Thus I grew proud of the women from Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, and the Old World. One saw at a glance why women were designed. They tame, they soothe, they rouse the good and idealise the beautiful. And how they brought beauty by their craving for flowers. In their little gardens were flowers or plants from home. All the way from home. These flourished in the sun and adorned the rooms. It was a simple touch, but it was a reminder that the pagan days had gone, and men who would live on the prairie must bow to the Beautiful, the Good, and the True.

CHAPTER X

THE COMING OF THE CHILDREN

THE pains of maternity herald the coming of babes, a strange way to usher joy into the land, but were it not for the pain men might be bestial and women careless of chastity and the true charms of motherhood. Of all the brave deeds there is none so brave as the bearing of children. It is the test of love, the sacrifice for Him. Out of the anguish comes living joy, and from this joy women, if they will, can go forward to immortality.

The pains of motherhood can be borne with a certain composure in marble halls, or homes pitched in highly organised communities. But out on the prairie, at forty below, with the snow drifting, the doctor stopped, dying or dead, in a drift, how great the anguish of the woman and the silent, thinking man with his eye on the road and his heart beating a mournful tune! Here is a heroism greater than Waterloo and finer than the tale of Joan of Arc. Tragic it may appear,

but beautiful, so beautiful that I always salute with reverence the mothers of prairie children.

The telephone has ended much of the misery of uncertainty, but away back in the bush, far from the rail and the telephone, it is another story. But the men are brave; the police have always helped them too. Every child born in the West is worth five imported men. The child of the prairie has no hunger for the Highland hills or English meadows. There are no ties of flesh and blood that pull, that call, and sometimes tempt men to uproot their stakes, cash their cheques, and beat back home. The prairie child is the prairie child. Canadian born. And for such a child men have died.

There is a story of Sergeant Daring of the North-West Police, a gentleman of England, Rider of the Plains. At the end of his beat, fifty by fifty miles, there lived a homesteader newly wed to a girl from Devon; one of those fine women who gave us men like Drake and Hawkins. The fruit of this union was the news of the coming of a child. It was winter. In the shack the woman worried; as is the way, the man was more worried. The doctor was thirty miles away. He could not get the woman to the town. Sergeant Daring of the North-West Police was worrying too. This worry was self-imposed. It was not his task. But Daring was a Rider of the Plains.

"DEAR JACK,

"Can you get the doctor on Monday?

"Yours sincerely,

"BILL."

This was the note a faithful Indian brought in. Outside the wind was howling. It was bitterly cold. The Indian, brave fellow, was exhausted with exposure. Daring gave him his bed; made a pot of hot soup; and left it by his side. Then, putting on his furs and snow-shoes and lifting his staff, he went out into the biting blast.

"Can you get the doctor?"

That was buzzing in his brain. He disappeared across the plain. The Indian, knowing the peril, muttered a rude prayer for the big chief. And how that wind howled and cut the face! How the snow blinded the eyes! And how often Daring stumbled into the drifts. But he was strong. He had lived in the land of the Eskimo. He could almost scent the old trail from out of the dozen blind trails of death. But the wind! the wind! He could only stagger on. Ever beating in his brain was—

"Can you get the doctor?"

When night came he had only done fifteen miles, and felt exhausted. He crept into the lee of a mound of snow to rest his body and shut his eyes, for they were aching. Weariness threatened

sleep; sleep on such a night would mean the sleep of death. For such occasions a man must have an iron will. He shook off his lethargy, crawled from his hole, and set forth again. The trails were blinded. But the stars were true. So he picked his way. The wind eased down, so the going was better than before. But there was fifteen miles, and by all the rules of physical exhaustion he was done. But mind over matter is a fine thing. He went on staggering, staggering, staggering. In his brain was that message—

"Can you get the doctor?"

In obedience to this call the gods gave him the far-off lights of the town for hope. A grin came over his suffering features. He was winning; this is the way of the police. At last he reached the outskirts of the town and stumbled into the house of Dr. Sandhit.

"Oh, sergeant! You're done. Come in!" and the doctor's wife helped him to the room. She gave him a hot drink, took off his furs, and rubbed his feet and hands with snow, then soothed them with oil.

"Thanks, Mrs. Sandhit. I'm fit as a fiddle now. But where's the doctor?"

"Up the back trail to Gorman's."

"When will he be back?"

"I don't know, but I do know that he has to

go on to Schneider's, another maternity case, too."

"That means he can't get to the Devon Farm on Monday?"

"I'm afraid it does."

"Good Heavens, that's awful!" exclaimed Daring. "It's a first baby, too."

"I am so sorry. Bob will go if we can get him, but then there's the other cases."

"It looks really hopeless. It is not fair to ask him. He is about dead with work and exposure this winter already. You had better give me some chloroform and some dressings."

"Will you manage?" asked the woman, herself a mother.

"I must," declared the sergeant.

"You are so kind to think of that poor woman out there," and she gave him what he wanted.

"Thank you, Mrs. Sandhit. I will let you know how I get on."

"Yes, do," and the door closed.

Sergeant Daring set out for Devon Farm. It was thirty miles away, and too dangerous for horses. But the wind was not so hard. He had two days to do it in. And he went like a brave English gentleman. He knew the road. There were shacks on the way. Gladly the inmates warmed him and gave him food, and women looked with love and admiration as he staggered

out of the door against weather which compelled even the beasts to be watered inside the barn. It is so difficult to paint the hardness of such a task. One must have lived in the north to understand fully. But he won, for at the end of the second day he saw the smoke of the shack.

Striking the trail he met the half-demented husband with bloodshot eyes and face pale with anguish and suffering.

"Is he coming?" he roared.

"No, he can't yet."

"Good God!" and he staggered at the thought of it.

"Come on, Bill; none of these hysterics when there's a job to be done."

"But who's to do it?"

"I will."

"Can you?"

"Yes," he said with emphasis, so as to ease the anguish of the man, but in his heart Sergeant Daring was afraid of the task.

"Jack, you've saved my sanity. I was almost going mad before you came up."

"All right. Now shut up. She must not know he is not coming."

"I understand, old man. Come in," and he led the way to the house. In the room lay the pale, beautiful girl, but her eyes filled with hope and tears when she saw the sergeant.

"He's coming, then?" she said.

"Yes, he's coming. Cheer up."

"I am so glad. . . . I am so glad," and she gripped the sheets and bit her lip to stifle the pains of maternity.

Everything was ready, so the sergeant sat down and talked about the most amusing things he knew, despite the fact that his toes were slightly frost-bitten, also his nose. While he talked he kept rubbing the extremities, and in time life returned.

* * * *

Nature is wonderful. Nature[®] played to his hands. When the pain was too severe he gave her just a whiff of chloroform. There were no terrors, at least, not the terrors of imagination—the most fearful aspect of maternity.

And so the child was born.

A beautiful boy.

A fine Canadian.

And a prairie child.

When it had arrived the sergeant gave the woman just a last dose of chloroform to send her into slumber. As she slept she mumbled—

"Doctor . . . Doctor . . . Is it a boy? . . . Is it a boy?"

"Yes, a beautiful boy."

She fell asleep with a smile on her face.

* * * *

"Jack," said the grinning father to him later.

"What?"

"You're a marvel."

"Get off! Shove the kettle on the fire and fill the tea-pot."

"It's all ready. I've been waiting for hours. I've made the tea ten times and walked round the shack fifty times."

"You can come in now."

"My!" and his face beamed.

A beautiful boy lay asleep in his mother's arms.

"Jack, give me your hand. By God, I shall never forget the sergeant of the North-West Mounted Police!"

"Let's have the tea," said the sergeant, hiding his own emotions, also the fearful strain. He was almost on the verge of collapse.

But the tea revived him.

* * * *

"Where's the doctor?" said the happy girl when she awoke.

"There's the doctor," said her husband.

"What!"

The sergeant grinned.

"It's true," said her husband.

"But you said the doctor was coming."

"He couldn't."

"Well, I never!" and she burst out laughing.

"It's all right now. And what a fine little boy!" said Sergeant Daring.

"Just a darling!" and she drew the baby gently to her side and looked at it.

"All over?" said a voice as Dr. Sandhit staggered sleepless and exhausted into the shack.

"Yes, doctor. O.K."

"Good! . . . Good! Give me a drop of tea," he said, hoarse with cold.

"Here you are, doc," the husband said, handing a cup.

"How did you get here?" Daring inquired.

"I came on from Schneider's. My wife came out in the waggon to tell me. I left her there. She is chawed up with cold."

"Did you walk?"

"No. The horses are stuck in a drift a mile down the road."

"You'd better have a rest. Bill and I will get them out."

"Thanks. I'm sorry I can't help you. I must have a sleep."

"All right, doc. You come in here, there's a couch at the stove," the husband suggested.

The doctor stumbled into the kitchen. They put rugs over him. Then they went out to get the poor horses, famished and almost sleeping the sleep of death. Daring had to lash them from sleep to activity. He cut the harness and

left the "cutter." Each led an animal to the stable, where a meal drink, warm rugs, and a good mash brought them round.

Next day the sergeant drove the doctor home.

When they arrived the sergeant found a message to seek for a murderer. He loaded his revolver and disappeared into the Arctic night.

He was found dead in a drift.

But his name lives on.

A woman keeps his memory green.

And men speak with awe of Sergeant Daring of the North-West Mounted Police.

* * * *

But there are others on the prairies whose deeds are legion, whose names are known from the Red River to Vancouver. Dr. Sandhit was one. Here was a man who had forsaken the luxuries of cities to carry the Red Cross where others refused to go. Unlike many of the younger medicos, he was not attracted to the fashionable and lucrative game of feeling the pulse of pretty darlings, prescribing coloured water three times a day, and paying "anxious" visits to see that the diet of milk puddings and beef tea was reducing the chin, and bringing the waist down to the proportions which indicate that the owner does not really over-eat or tuck away a dollar's worth of ice-cream between meals and extra meals. He was

no authority on abortion; he lived, as all great medicos do, for the honour of his calling and the peopling of the land with a race as free as possible from the ills which men are heir to.

To say that he was the only one would be absurd. Since the days of the Hudson Bay Company medical men have rendered yeoman service. Like Grenfell of Labrador, all of these doctors were and are missionaries of the noblest type. One often hears about the absence of chivalry, sentiment, and romance from the American Continent, but this is far from the truth. Canada and America, especially in the pastoral and farming districts, is as full of that beautiful nobility we read of in *The Vicar of Wakefield*. This is not apparent to the casual observer. The squareness, the rudeness, the muddiness of things always meet the eye on making contact with a prairie town. Barns with brawling teamsters, restaurants run by Chinks, stores handled by Jews, religion scorned by political bosses, and hungry real estate men on the prowl, do not assist one's first impressions.

Living *within* the towns of the prairie tones down the crude and ill-assorted impressions. At Bullock Creek there were only five hundred people in town, but one saw the Church of England, the Church of Scotland, the Methodist Church, the Roman Catholic Church, and the German Baptist

Church. All had ministers. All were working in the town and beyond. And heading the community in affairs of thought and culture was the doctor. He was the rock on which shams and bounders split. He was by no means polite; his tongue could bite when it willed, but no man denied his skill, his sense of duty, his code of honour, the example of a good, clean family life, above all, his bravery. Courage is the test applied to men who live in the West.

"Stuart," he said one night, "you maintain the law like Perry, Starnes, and McLeod, and I will keep them clean. Between us we can best the coons who want to make the West a dump for bad booze, French postcards, sticky tales, and the morals of Sodom."

"It isn't heaven, you know, doctor," I said, filling my pipe.

"Heaven has never been seen on this earth, Stuart. I'm not a Holy Roller" (an extreme Salvationist). "But I'm mighty proud of most of the folks around. They don't wash much; they don't know much; they're rough maybe; sometimes they never pay me, but they are as good a bunch as I know. We're not here for the good of our health, but to help Canada."

"That's right, doc," I said.

"I know it is. Money doesn't matter much, either. When they won't pay I walk into the field

and take a cow from them, that pays for my tobacco and groceries. That will do my time."

"You're a hopeless idealist, doctor."

"You can't be a materialist here. It's a privilege to live."

"I never thought of it."

"And a greater privilege to keep other people living, as well as bringing babies home to the prairie."

"I see what you mean."

"I once thought of Toronto, went there for a month, but had to quit and come back home."

"Why?"

"Gee! I got lousy with dollars and demoralised eating dinners in the King Edward Hotel. The man I was doing *locum* for left me a list of well-to-do women to visit. Big hefty women they were, choked up with indigestion and bored stiff with autos, cinemas, novels, chocolates, and love. I got tired looking at them, and nearly killed the fellow's practice by prescribing:

"No meat. No ice-cream.

Sell your autos.

Do the washing. Scrub the floor.

And walk. Walk. Walk.

I shoved it all in Latin and told them to take the prescriptions to the chemist, then took the night sleeper to Winnipeg, sending a wire to my friend—

“Your patients cured. Am beating it back to Bullock Creek.”

“What did he say?”

“I guess he’ll shoot me when I go to town.”

“But you missed a fortune.”

“Bah! I’m happier on the trail. I’m making Canada here. I would only be killing Canada with bismuth, castor oil, and ten dollars a visit if I were living in Toronto or Montreal. It beats me to know why all them young fellows are frightened of the West.”

“I imagine there’s not enough money in it,” I said.

“The curse of the age. They get that creed from New York and Chicago. I’m sorry! I’m sorry! Ours is a great profession. It is a pity to see poor girls and decent working women in Winnipeg, Toronto, and Montreal working overtime to pay off the doctor’s bills. I don’t believe in charity, but if we’re going to pull Canada through this stage of its history there’s got to be less self-seeking on the part of all, as well as the doctors. There’s too much money among the commercial classes in the East. I would make them sweat, work, and suffer a little like the old-timers had to. They would be healthier, they would be happier. My word, how Canada has changed! When I was a boy in old Ontario we had to rustle for our grub,

help mother with the chores, milk the cows, work with dad in the fields, and take odd jobs to help us through college. But it's gone! All that's gone! By God, it's a pity! This dollar business is a fearful curse on this continent. We're not rich here, Stuart, but we're happy."

"I'm with you, doctor. Still, that's a world-wide problem, isn't it?"

"No, it isn't. The Lord has been far too good to Americans and Canadians. Six feet of black loam and Massey Harris' gadgets has choked them Easterners with the dollars sweated from the prairies. This continent is bursting with dollars. When I see Jews and bohunks with fat stomachs, and diamonds riding around on our dividends, Gee! I feel as mad as Sitting Bull when he riddled the liver of General Custer. It's not the money I want, but I want the West to have a bigger share so that we can make this land as well settled as New England and Pennsylvania. It's a good country, but we want more people. And I want a concrete road from Winnipeg Town Hall to Vancouver Pier. Hell! what do those five-cent orators know about roads?"

"Let's keep the trails and the loneliness to ourselves. That's the charm of the West. I don't want to smell petrol, 'hot dogs,' and half-canned drummers from the boundary to Hudson's Bay," I replied.

"That's a short view, Stuart. I know, of course, that's the reason for you old countrymen liking the police. But I want to hear the sleigh-bells ringing all around me, and I want to hear the children laughing in every corner of this country. We have got the goods right here. Canada doesn't know it, and I believe there's some guys east of Winnipeg who're holding this country up. We've simply got to beat that down. If we don't, I tell you, Stuart, that there are bad-tempered and ill-educated men in the West who will cut the painter and tell Uncle Sam to come right over. I'm a Canadian. I have no grouse against the American, but I'm here to keep that old Canadian flag flying, and by God, the man from the East or West who's going to hold us up has gotto swing for it."

"But that's coming, doc. You've seen the advance of things. Rome was not built in a day. You're too impatient."

"I don't get that sit-me-down-and-wait-for-the-moon stuff, Stuart. We've gotto shout; we've gotto work for it."

"You're doing more than your share, so why worry?"

"But way down East they're not helping me with the load. But have a cigar," he said, changing the subject. "I'm not good company in this."

"East is East, West is West,
And never the twain shall meet."

"Thanks, doctor. I always enjoy your company. And it's fine to meet a Canadian who lives for the glory of the prairies."

"I am a dreamer, I know. But Sir John Macdonald, Strathcona, Sandford Fleming, Dennis Oliver, Defoe, Black, Stead, James, Scott, Gibbon, and all them big-wigs are with me in what I say. This is the place for children. Manitoba, Alberta, and Saskatchewan have the healthiest children in the world. When I'm beating the trail and see the kids laughing round the homesteads it's then I feel the game's worth while. Way back in the old country there are too many people starving. It's a shame. The old country sent the men and money to make Canada. The old country defended us in the days of the War of Independence and helped us in the war of 1812 and the Rebellion of Louis Riel. It's the old country's Navy that keeps the seas. It's the prestige of Britain that has kept hands off Canada. So I say, Stuart, it is up to us to bring these people over and give them a chance. I want to hear the sleigh-bells ringing, as I said before. I want to hear the school ma'am teaching them 'Oh Canada.' When I'm dying I want to know that all's well and there's joy in the golden West. . . . Good night, old boy. Glad to have had you. It's the likes o' you who help us to make Canada worth while."

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"By gosh, that's a good fellow; he's not afraid of his skin. Tough as a teamster and clever with the knife. Guess he's the best medicine man in these parts," a homesteader said to me one day as the doctor went flying past in his old Ford car, which was sliding all over the greasy trail, due to the rain.

"I don't know how he comes through it all," I said.

"The Big Boss" (God) "looks after them fellows," was the simple reply. "I ain't much of a Christian, but I've panned it out that fellows like the doc, who play a clean game, gets a return ticket home when it's forty below, and the coyotes howling."

"There's something in that, Jim."

"Yep! I know. See them two kids! Fine kids, aren't they? But they wouldn't have been here had old doc been a skunk with a yellow streak. I haven't paid him yet, for I've been hailed out and blown out, but the crop's going to be a right good 'un this year and I'll pay him with interest. He doesn't keep accounts and sit watching the ready reckoner. The mean guys often take advantage. Them —y bohunks" (foreigners) "think the docs shouldn't get a cent, but Gee! we'll make 'em pay up, if we gotto burn them out or chew their liver off. The doc's a white man."

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So far as my beat was concerned this doctor eased out all the imaginative terrors of maternity. When a mean hound of a man would not get the telephone in, up went the doc and said, "Look here, you cold-livered son of a bitch, your wife's going to have a child. I want to know when things are going good or bad. It's up to you to get the telephone in. If you don't I'll make you swing for murder."

"All right, doc, I'll do it. I'm sorry. I never thought of it in that way."

"No. You're thinking of your dollars. Kids are better than dollars. You get that telephone in right now."

"Sure."

A woman's eyes would brighten with gratitude.

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"We're not going to foot the bills for new roads and more roadmen. I guess we've got enough to pay. Them taxes are killing us," said Schneider at a meeting.

"Sure!" said Dovesky, a Russian.

"The trail's good enough for me," said Levine, a money-grubber too.

"We'll put it to the vote," said the chairman.

"Yes, when I've finished," said the Doctor, jumping up. "There's got to be plain speak-

ing to-night. Schneider doesn't want the roads fixed."

"I'm farming; they suit me," shouted Schneider.

"Shut up when I'm speaking. . . . When Schneider came here ten years ago he had nothing. Now he's got a section" (640 acres), "twenty cows, and ten horses. He makes his wife walk about on bare feet and dig the garden two days before she has a baby. And I nearly lost my horses getting through the drift to save the child. And he says he doesn't want roads. He's got about five thousand dollars in the bank. He doesn't give a gaud damn for Canada. He's here to get the dollars, then quit. Those who have agreed with him are the same. Life is cheap to these bohunks."

"Who's a bohunk?" shouted Schneider.

"You are! Sit down, or I'll fell you like an ox," said the doctor. "You've got to learn that this is Canada. You have got to pay me now, and pay me double the usual figure. All the foreigners are not like you, thank God."

"Hear! Hear!" said the pastor and some decent hard-working Germans.

"This new road has gotto go through. The other roads have gotto be cleaned up. We've gotto pay the taxes. We've gotto think of the future. The old-timers suffered and died that we might live. We're in luxury compared with them. Schneider was a serf in Germany. If he's not going

to be a man on the prairie, then, by Heaven, he's got to eat the hemlock. It beats me all these short-sighted views. Good roads save the horses. You can get to town for stores or a dance. You can see your friends. You can have a good time, too. And if it's money you're after you can make more. If this meeting votes against cleaning up the roads, then I'm going to quit."

"No! . . . No! . . . No!" shouted the decent men in the meeting.

"Thanks, friends, I'm done," he said with emotion. "Let this be the turning-point now. We're going right on to live not for our own mean selves but for Canada, the women, and the kids," and he sat down.

"Carried," shouted the meeting.

Schneider, red in the face and terribly embarrassed, rose to reply.

"Sit down," they shouted.

"No, boys, let him have his say; this is a free country," said the chairman.

"I'm going to do the right thing, boys. I'm going to apologise."

"Give your wife boots first," said an Ontarion.

"Yes, I'll do that too, although you don't understand our European system."

"I *don't* want to."

"Order! Order!" said the chairman.

"I've made a mistake. I see it now. I'm

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sorry, very sorry. I don't want the doc to quit. And I'm going to pay him to-night."

"Hear! Hear!"

"And I'm going to turn out my teams on the roads to do the job for nothing. If you other fellows will do the same we can give the doctor the road."

"Gee! You're a good fellow, after all," some one shouted.

"I intend to be," said Schneider.

"Shake," said the doctor, rising and holding out his hand.

The audience cried encore.

* * * *

In this way the doctor, like many other doctors on the prairie, made the land safe for women and little children. The terrors of maternity are rapidly vanishing. Men who once hungered for the dollars now realise that home, the wife, and bairns is a greater part. The coming of children tames the beast among men. Children are so pure, so spirited, so pretty. The bounds of caste, creed, or race are not for them. The children of foreigners play with the British and Canadian children. The air is alive with their roars of laughter; the homes in merriment with their little plays and pretty ploys. And the prairie echoes back the ballads of the nursery and the ballads of the brave.

It is so nice to ride around and meet them galloping their ponies to school, or gee-upping a stiff old donkey in the cutter. Behind runs the dog who *won't* go home, sometimes the pet calf and the bleating ba-ba-lamb. While the children say A B C D E F G, big and little doggies, sheep, and ponies, wander sadly round the school, looking through the window at times, wondering, wondering what all the nonsense is for, when they (the animals) want to gallop, chase the gopher, shoo the hens, and bite the tail of the old brown cow.

In school they tell teacher tales of "Touser," the dog who eats the gopher, chases the cat, hunts the wolves, and runs away with mamma's meat and bread. They speak of their ponies who walk into the kitchen for sugar and biscuits. Of the naughty hen who "laid away" and brought up her chickens on the prairie. And of the bad, bad wolf who gobbled hens, chickens, and all. And they cannot understand why mamma weeps when she gets a letter from home. They do not quite grip why dad should go rather potty on "Burns' Night," "St. Andrew's Night," "Boxing Day," etc. All they know is that *this* is home. That "Oh Canada" is their song. And that the prairie (to them) is finer by far than the lights of London or the jewels in the crowns of emperors and kings.

One admires their manliness, their quickness,

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and their readiness. They help *mamma* to do the milking. They help her to bring in the wood. They can wash the dishes. They ride their ponies for the messages. They go out to the fields with tea for dad and the men. They make solemn old daddy laugh when he's tired and dead beat with work in the sun. And the winter they love. How they enjoy the skating, the sleighing, the curling, and the tea parties! The cakes are so lovely. The plum-pudding fine. And Father Christmas *never* forgets them. He comes with his sleigh-bells ringing, ringing, and down the chimney he falls with dollies, engines, prams, oranges, nuts, and ginger wine. Oh, it's great fun!

Children are compensations for the land behind. When that awful hunger sweeps over (about once a year) the women dry their eyes and carry on for Bobby, Mary, and John. They realise, too, that Canada has given them a chance, also an inheritance to pass on. They are not serfs but landlords. The workhouse has no terrors now. And there is a motor-car to whirl about in and see their friends. But above all, God has blessed them with beautiful children. Children are the jewels of the soul. Canada jealously guards these children. The schemes for their care and enjoyment astonish the visitor. Whatever sins have been committed by legislators—and God, these are many!—to the children they have done their part. For this we

must honour them. They have obeyed the Book
and endorsed the plea of the Master—

“Suffer little children to come unto Me
And forbid them not,
For of such is
THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.”

CHAPTER XI

THE COMING OF THE TREES

THE story of the prairie would be incomplete without the story of the coming of the trees. "The bald-headed prairie" is a well-known phrase out West. Bald it surely is, for Nature denied it the shelter and beauty of trees. Settlers from the Highlands, Germany, and Russia have found this want most of all. There was nothing to break the monotonous roll of the prairie lands. Nothing to stop the wind. Nothing to give shade to the beasts, and nothing to get behind when the wind blew. Undoubtedly this had a depressing effect on the highly sensitive. The women felt it most of all. Women must have trees as well as flowers. Trees give a touch of home. Trees suggest permanence, dignity, and peace. The most ordinary homestead, when enclosed in a belt of woodland, looks snug, secure, and stately. Trees have always been in the parks of snobs. We are all snobs. Ask a policeman.

At Saskatoon University I had my first great

lesson of the value of trees. I was chatting with Dean Rutherford, that noble pioneer of scientific agriculture. We talked of the prairie, its wonderful soil, its uses to make men strong, rich, good, and independent. Disadvantages were also discussed. Loneliness, we agreed, was rapidly vanishing, but it was not like British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, or the Highlands—all well endowed with trees.

The Dean astonished me by showing the psychological effects of this deficiency. The home was open to the four winds of heaven. A man's shirt or best pair of Sunday pants when out on the line stood a good chance of being blown to Vancouver or Nova Scotia. The tablecloths and bed sheets cracked like whips on the line and frayed the edges, a thing that worries a woman. Curious men in the passing train could see if Bill Jones was in bed or Jack Brown having a beer. If Jack left a first instalment of *The Mad Dogs of Borneo* lying on the verandah when he went in for a chew or a meal, *The Mad Dogs of Borneo*, with the aid of the wind, would most likely return to Borneo, or fall down the chimney of a Mormon in Utah just as he was convincing the fourteenth wife that all's well in the land of Salt Lakes and brides' cakes.

Of course it has its advantages. A settler brewing firewater can always see the policeman on the skyline. A woman can spot a frivolous husband

talking to Sarah Tomson, or calling on Mrs. Jones. The boss can see the men working. The men can see the boss coming. From the verandah the old brown cow can be spotted dodging the milk-can by "hiding" in the slough, or attempting to commit suicide by eating up the green crop. The children are always in view. The baby can't go round the corner. A dog can't hide with a stolen leg of beef. One can shoot jack-rabbits and gophers by sitting in bed and opening the window. A woman gets time to wash her face and change her dress when she sees the parson, the Tomsons, or the Jonsons on the trail. Still, it isn't nice. If you're living near the railway, all the American tourists can see the ladies taking off their transformations, putting false teeth in tumblers, discarding darned jumpers, and going to bed in Timothy Eaton one-dollar kimonos.

But the serious side of the matter is, without trees men never settle, women always fret. The hunger for the beautiful is never appeased. One can discover an aching heart by riding up to a bare homestead and see, as I have seen, a little square at the door, not much bigger than this,

Violets. Forget-me-nots.

In that square, surrounded by little stones and

broken bits of china, I read a mad hunger for flowers, for friendship, and consolation. Now I know that trees would have saved much of the trouble. The Dean insisted, and I believe he is right, that once a man plants trees on the homestead he will never leave it. Even California will not draw him in winter when the trees are up. There is a tremendous fascination in watching trees grow in ground which is your own. More so on the prairie, because it was said by the Indians and old-timers that trees *wouldn't* grow.

But trees do grow. Most beautiful trees. With the Dean I went over to a forestry farm run by the Dominion Government. I saw a small forest all grown in ten years. Between the rows of trees I found that the Forestry Department had nailed another fallacy to the ground—that is, the alleged inability to grow fruit. There were strawberries, black currants, red currants, loganberries, etc. Apple trees also grow, but bush fruits are best. To the man in London, Aberfoyle, or Timbuctoo this is of no great importance. But to Canada it is of tremendous importance. Germany has led the world in afforestation. But I doubt if it can beat the Canadian Government schemes. A homesteader can get hundreds and hundreds of young trees free of charge by sending a postcard and conforming to certain scientific methods of planting. These trees will in time change the

climate and solve most of the problems of the prairie.

After my visit to Saskatoon I went round the prairie convinced that I had witnessed a startling discovery. I found the Dean was right. Hostile as nearly all farmers are to new methods, I found many had seized this great idea. It was refreshing to pass from the burning prairie into the shelter of a square belt of trees round the homestead. The cattle were pleased, too. The birds were also glad. For centuries they had been bored stiff trying to find lodgings in the patches of scrub or attempting to balance their little fat bodies on attenuated flower stalks. Now they can build in the trees. From the trees they can swoop down on the grubs. The increase of bird-life is bound to be rapid, and that, with certain exceptions, is good for agriculture.

The men who were growing trees had lost "the looking fever." Their eyes were not so vacant. When work was over they sat on the verandah and watched the trees. I watched them, too. I talked and talked about trees. I almost went mad about trees. They would break the wind. They would bring moisture. They would stop the snow-drifts in winter. They would shelter the roads. They would turn the bald-headed prairie into a sort of pretty Norway, which in winter, with the electric lights and sleigh-bells ringing, ringing, would be a picture for the gods.

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"Trees goot, verra goot," a German said to me when on patrol,

"Why?"

"Maket the money."

"The fruit, you mean?"

"Yah! See. I grow the raspberry, strawberry, loganberry. Pay the groceries. Maket all the jam. And I hab trees to stop windt! Goot! Yah!"

* * * *

"The wife's happy noo," said Jock McKay.

"I'm glad to hear it."

"She comes from Galloway. She misses the water, the trees maist of a'. She got quite thin-lookin', lookin'. I thocht she wis lookin' for another man, but she fair frichtened me when she said she was lookin' for a joiner tae make a coffin.

"What's up?" said I.

"It's a' up," says she.

"Are ye gettin' daft?" says I.

"Ay," says she. Then she started tae greet.

"What's wrang?" said I.

"I'm ay lookin'," says she.

"Can ye no' stop lookin'?" says I.

"Ay, if you'll stick in the trees," says she.

"Man, I just sent a postcard tae Saskatoon. I got four hundred. Look at them," he said, pointing to the square of beautiful Russian poplar, also some firs.

"Fine," I answered.

"She's as happy as the birds in May noo. Sings like a canary. Queer folk the weemin'. An' mind ye, they never cost me a cent . . . no a cent."

"You're from Aberdeen?" I inquired.

"No! Fife," he shouted, as I galloped away.

* * * * *

"Hello, Bill! I never see you round the bootleggers now," I said to a hard case with a thirst that hitherto had not been satisfied.

"I'm busy these days, Charlie."

"What's up?"

"Blockin' the sky-line so the missus can't see me coming home."

"Tree fence?"

"Sure! Guess I'm fixed here for good."

"Why?"

"Keep watching them. Like babies they are. Can walk about in pyjamas and a fur coat when it's forty below. Them guys at Saskatoon have struck it right for once. But it's awkward, too."

"Why, Bill?"

"Gee, I can't see Jock Campbell's shack."

"What's that got to do with it?"

"He gets a bottle twice a year from Winnipeg. Used to wave his shirt out of the top window when he saw the whisky on the trail. Makes life expensive. Have to buy one myself now."

"Keep shovin' in them trees, Bill," his wife interjected.

"All right, Biddy. It'll keep you out of Brandon," he mumbled, giving me a parting wink.

* * * *

"Hello, Algy; you're working for once," I said to my old friend.

"Yes, Charlie, awfully busy. Just been putting in a lawn. What do you think of it?"

"Splendid."

"Would you think this was Canada?" he said, pointing to the enclosure of beautiful trees, the wide English lawn, rose beds, sheltered walks, and long lines of climbing roses.

"It's like Hampton Court," I said.

"Yes. Come on to the verandah."

"You're not really going to stop working?"

"I will for once. The missus is boss now, so I've got to work at times."

"I hear you, Algy," said the pretty one, coming out with a lovely baby.

"Good afternoon, Mrs. Gordon; I'm so glad to see you and the baby."

"I'm glad to see you. Tea will be here in a minute. Isn't my hubby industrious these days?"

"Yes. You've reformed him."

"Killing him, you mean," mumbled Algy, with a grin.

"It agrees with you *and* the farm," I said.

"Wheesht! I've got the sack, Charlie. We have a foreman now. I go round keeping the flies off the horses, and lifting straws off the rose walks. But I *really* put in the lawn. Say, I'm going potty on this tree business. The fever's spreading, too, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"I don't want to go back to Montreal now," his wife said. "It's so fascinating watching them grow. We are going to plant right round the fields as a wind break. That will stop 'the blow-out'" (a sort of tornado that sweeps the summer fallow up like waves piling up the sand).

"It's going to do more than that for the prairie folk," said Algy. "It will stop this buying and selling, chopping and changing from farm to farm. I tell you, Charlie, from now we're going to breed a race of yeoman farmers who centuries after this will say, as they do in Somerset, 'Me and mine 'ave been here for two hundred years.' It's the trees and not the parson that's kept the French-Canadian in Quebec, and the old Scots people in Pictou and Glengarry. Trees for the prairie is a greater discovery than radium or electric light."

"That's true," I replied.

"It's meant so much to the poorer women," Mrs. Gordon said. "Look at the Gormans' place now. Why, it used to be bald, bare, and repulsive. The poor woman had not a flower or shrub. The

doctor told Gorman if he didn't plant trees he would give him what Socrates got (the hemlock). He has got a beautiful wind-break now. A pretty lawn and flower garden. Gorman is so proud of the place that he doesn't go into the pool rooms now or hang about the hotels. And Mrs. Gorman seems a new woman. It's so nice to be sheltered and have a lovely lawn where one can shelter in the heat of the day and play with the children. I somehow think it makes people good. At least, I am sure it creates a love of the beautiful. We are so apt to concentrate on the price of grain and the rise in eggs. Farming has always been a horribly material affair. Association with animals does tend to brutalise. We must fight that here."

"You'll do for Rugby," Algy said.

"Wouldn't Dr. Arnold have loved to hear that?" I interjected.

"It's true, Charlie," she insisted.

"Yes, I feel sure it is. What impresses me is the number of schemes in operation to make this land worth while. We have more Utopian legislation here than Moore ever dreamt of."

"It's the air, Charlie. It makes one dream dreams. So different to the coast. One gets up and starts singing. I do believe it makes us the greatest optimists in the world. When our luck's out, as it sometimes is with a bad crop, blowing, or hail, somehow we never think of quitting. There's

a sort of Monte Carlo lure about the prairie. One year you lose all, but five years' good crop and a man need never work again. I think it's simply wonderful. I am a Westerner, now and for ever. Here's the tea," concluded the lady.

* * * *

The coming of the trees has surely capped the schemes of statesmen and scientists. The old-timers rub their eyes when they come back for a holiday. In fifty years this is going to be the most beautiful, the most wealthy, and most charming country in the world. But who was the man who pioneered this tree business?

The world ought to know his name.

CHAPTER XII

THE SQUAD OF ONE*

SERGEANT BLUE of the Mounted Police was a so-so kind of guy ;
He swore a bit, and he lied a bit, and he boozed a bit on the sly ;
But he held the post at Snake Creek Bend for country and home and God,
And he cursed the first and forgot the rest—which wasn't the least bit odd.

Now the life of the North-West Mounted Police breeds an all-round kind of man :
A man who can jug a down-South thug when he rushes the red-eye can ;
A man who can pray with a dying man, or break up a range stampede—
Such are the men of the Mounted Police, and such are the men they breed.

* Reprinted from " Why Don't they Cheer ? " by R. J. C. Stead, by kind permission of Messrs. T. Fisher Unwin, Ltd.

The snow lay deep at the Snake Creek post and
deep to east and west,
And the sergeant made his ten-league beat and
settled down to rest
In his two-by-four that they called a "post" where
the flag flew overhead,
And he took a look at his monthly mail, and this
is the note he read :

"To Sergeant Blue, of the Mounted Police, at the
post at Snake Creek Bend,
From U.S. Marshal of County Blank; greetings to
you, my friend:
They's a team of toughs give us the slip, though
they shot up a couple of blokes,
And we reckon they's hid in Snake Creek Gulch,
and posin' as farmer folks.

"They's as full of sin as a barrel of booze, and
as quick as a cat with a gun,
So if you happen to hit their trail be first to start
the fun ;
And send out your strongest squad of men and
round them up if you can,
For dead or alive we want them here. Your truly,
Jack McManh."

And Sergeant Blue sat back and smiled, "Ho, here is a chance of game!

Folks 'round here have been so good that life is getting tame;

I know the lie of Snake Creek Gulch—where I used to set my traps—

I'll blow out there to-morrow, and I'll bring them in—perhaps."

Next morning Sergeant Blue, arrayed in farmer smock and jeans,

In a jumper sleigh he had made himself set out for the evergreens

That grow on the bank of Snake Creek Gulch by a homestead shack he knew,

And a smoke curled up from the chimney-pipe to welcome Sergeant Blue.

"Aha, and that looks good to me," said the sergeant to the smoke,

"For the lad that owns this homestead shack is East in his wedding-yoke;

There are strangers here, and I'll bet a farm against a horn of booze

That they are the bums that are predestined to dangle in a noose."

So he drove his horse to the shanty door and
hollered a loud "Good-day,"

And a couple of men with fighting-irons came out
beside the sleigh,

And the sergeant said, "I'm a stranger here and
I've driven a weary mile ;

If you don't object I'll just sit down by the stove
in the shack awhile."

~~Then~~ the sergeant sat and smoked and talked of
the home he had left down East,

And the cold and the snow, and the price of land,
and the life of man and beast,

But all of a sudden he broke it off with, "Neigh-
bours, take a nip ?

There's a horn of the best you'll find out there in
my jumper, in the grip."

So one of the two went out for it, and as soon as
he closed the door

The other one staggered back as he gazed up the
nose of a forty-four ;

But the sergeant wasted no words with him, "Now,
fellow, you're on the rocks,

And a noise as loud as a mouse from you and they'll
take you out in a box."

And he fastened the bracelets to his wrists, and
his legs with some binder-thread,
And he took his knife, and he took his gun, and
he rolled him on to the bed ;
And then as number two came in, he said, " If you
want to live,
Put up your dukes and behave yourself, or I'll
make you into a sieve."

And when he had coupled them each to each and
laid them out on the bed,

" It's cold, and I guess we'd better eat before we
go," he said.

So he fried some pork and he warmed some beans,
and he set out the best he saw,

And they ate thereof, and he paid for it, according
to British law.

That night in the post sat Sergeant Blue, with
paper and pen in hand,

And this is the word he wrote and signed and
mailed to a foreign land ;

" To U.S. Marshal of County Blank, greetings I
give to you ;

My squad has just brought in your men, and the
squad was

" Sergeant Blue."

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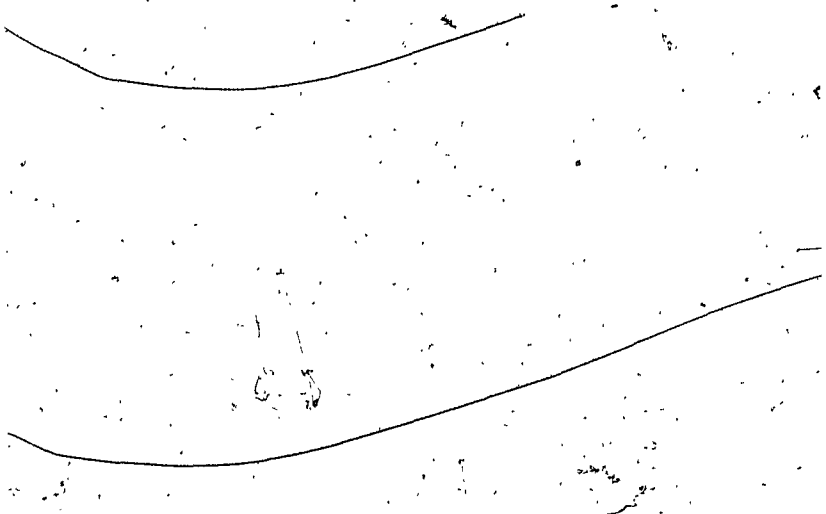
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*There are things unguessed, there are tales untold, in
the life of the great lone land,
But here is a fact that the prairie-bred alone may
understand,
That a thousand miles in the fastnesses the fear of the
law obtains,
And the pioneers of justice were the "Riders of the
Plains."*

ROBERT J. C. STEAD.

Two decorative curved lines, one above the other, spanning the width of the page. The top line is a simple arc. The bottom line is a more complex, wavy arc with some small loops and a tail extending to the right.

CHAPTER XIII

THE SCHOOL MA'AM FROM OXFORD

WHILE tracking the law-breaker one gets glimpses of the different races who are making Western Canada the granary of the Empire. Not so long ago I was on an expedition in Northern Manitoba. In these parts one finds the new Canadians, Galicians, Ruthenians, Russians, Austrians, Poles, etc. On viewing their somewhat primitive settlements and European methods of agriculture one at first has horrible misgivings about their suitability for Empire development. But on going deeper into the matter, weighing carefully the facts, such as the enormous extent of Canada, the need of a particularly hardy type, and the many difficulties in securing sufficient men and women from the old country prepared to sacrifice for many years the comforts of modern civilisation, one comes to the conclusion that Canada cannot shut the gates against honest, hardworking foreigners who will till the land. Many of the best settlers in Western Canada are Scandinavians, Galicians, Germans, Ruthenians,

and Russians. But Canada must copy the United States and bar the door against those decadent foreigners who swell the urban districts, contributing only to beggary and immorality. The city types of Europe are non-moral, parasitic, and a peril to vigorous life in the West.

Fortunately there are many brilliant men and women with the missionary spirit who labour long and hard in the lone parts of Canada, so that the new Canadians of the right type will imbibe the highest ideals of citizenship, and reap the fullest advantages from the soil of the West. Mr. J. T. M. Anderson of Saskatchewan is a notable example. Dr. R. S. Thornton of Manitoba is another. And those men and women of the teaching profession who do the work surely deserve the laurels of success. And I am proud to say that the graduates of Oxford, Cambridge, Girton, Cheltenham, etc., play a splendid part in the West.

* * * *

In Northern Manitoba I was astonished to meet a most charming girl from Oxford. A brilliant student. A woman seized with the spirit of Grenfell and Strathcona. I found her in a little village called Happy Valley, a new Canadian settlement. Not an educated person near her. Few comforts. No luxuries. Only letters from home and the smiles of the settlers to cheer her on. And she loved the job.

When I galloped into the settlement I did not expect culture or English hospitality. The foreigners fled on my approach ; that is their way ; they have been so used to the terrorism of Russian Czars and Baltic Barons. They rushed indoors ; the only visible face was that of a charming, dark-haired, dark-eyed lady standing in the door of the teacher's house.

"Hello, policeman," she said, smiling sweetly.

"Good morning ; fancy meeting you."

"It is funny ; I suppose. What did you expect ?"

"Bohunks and Russian knives."

"Ah no, not here. This is Happy Valley."

"I'm glad to hear it."

"Won't you come in and have a cup of tea ?"

"With pleasure," and I dismounted.

"Put your horse in the barn."

"Righto."

I stabled my charger, then went into the house. I gasped on entering the door.

"You look surprised," she said.

"I did not expect to see such a snuggery."

"One must make the best of things, you know."

"You certainly do," I said, sitting down.

"Do you take sugar ?"

"Yes, please."

"There you are. . . . Try these cakes. The settlers make them for me. I'm their little mother,

THE SCHOOL MA'AM FROM OXFORD 231

a sort of Czarina up here. This is only Canada in name; here I may rule, if I willed, with the power of the Romanoffs and the rod of Okrana."

"You don't, I imagine."

"No, they are so nice, if they do seem dirty. And they are so faithful when one is kind and true. It's awfully hard on me in the winter-time. But I can't leave them. They would follow me in tears to Winnipeg or Oxford, so here I am lost for evermore."

"Not lost! . . . Not lost!" I muttered.

"Not exactly. Just missing," and she grinned, showing her pretty teeth.

"You have got pluck. After meeting you, Cecil Rhodes and Dr. Livingstone are wash-outs."

"Please don't turn my head. I get so much flattery from my little flock that I am unable to stand any more. After all, it's my job. I'm paid for it."

"Not much, I imagine."

"No, but what's money? One doesn't need money here. And the fun is awfully good."

"How did you strike these parts?"

"When I finished at Oxford I found the prospect of being a school ma'am in a half-fed boarding-school not a pleasing proposition. And I had the wander lust. Dad gave me my fare to Winnipeg, so I came out. I went straight to the Deputy Minister of Education, a most charming person.

He looked me up and down for two minutes, then said, 'I'll give you a job.' That was in September. The school was new and I had to open it. No instructions were given me, all I knew was that I was the new school ma'am. 'They are so funny in Canada. No fuss or little hints for the road.'

"Same in the police," I said.

"So I have heard. . . . Well, I just boarded a mixed train (goods and passengers). My companions were all foreigners. The gentleman opposite snored, with his bare black feet on my cushion, and the lady next was suckling twins and changing nappies all the way. I gave her a hand to perform these hygienic duties necessary for babes. Behind me was an old Pole humming his droll ballads—mainly amorous, by the way—and over on the other side a French priest was reading Balzac and chewing tobacco. When the engine stopped for water we got out for apple pie, peanuts, chewing-gum, and tea. It was funny."

"It must have been," I said.

"But my troubles began on landing at the station, which was represented by a tin hut about two by four and a fat man with a green flag. It was rather a one-eyed town, all wooden shacks, muddy roads, and curious fat men hanging around the livery stable. The hotel looked as if it had been through an earthquake, one of the eaves gently resting for support on a telegraph pole.

The door had small-pox, the windows were patched with advertisements for Johnnie Walker, and as we entered there was a fearful whiff of five-cent cigars, old beer, bad beef, and bare feet, just like those funny little hotels one meets in Naples and Stamboul. And I was the only woman in the place. Somehow I felt like the woman in that melodrama—*The Bad Girl of the Family*."

"I know, I know. Go on, this is fearfully interesting," I said.

"Supper was served in rather a foggy atmosphere. There was the fat stationmaster who appeared in a new shirt—the first for months. The teamster had changed his trousers, and I know he washed his feet; I saw him at the pump. There were a couple of Russians with the soil of Canada under their nails and most unhappy about something in the middle of their backs; they kept shrugging and shrugging. 'It's not supper you need, it's Keatings,' said the Canadian teamster. Rather horror-stricken, I moved gently down the table, close to a charming North-West policeman; he seemed the only man who knew the design of water-taps and how they are turned on. Still, the supper was good. I was hungry and certainly enjoyed it. But I found it rather difficult to follow the discussion, mainly about quarter sections, wheat, elevators, the price of beer, rheumatism, corn cure, and the uses of chewing-gum."

"How about sleeping arrangements?" I inquired.

"I blush when I think of that. The hotel-keeper, a fat old thing with red nose, wicked eyes, and his trousers suspended with binder twine, showed me to my room. 'There you are, dear,' was his intimate announcement. 'Don't dear me,' I said, realising that was the psychological moment to announce that I had no acquaintance with Piccadilly or Leicester Square. Then I looked at my room. It was decidedly airy. The door was a muslin curtain to keep out the flies and permit observation of those who suddenly decamp without paying the bill. The walls were boards a quarter-inch thick, and somebody had pushed all the knots out of the wood either for ventilation or the satisfaction of the curious."

"Embarrassing," I said to her.

"Very. But if you had seen the bed! The sheets apparently were changed when the owner went to Winnipeg, about once a year; he then locked them up in the stable. The blankets had covered teamsters, woodmen, and squaws. And the legs had gone. One was supported by a jam jar, another by an old flower-pot; the head of the bed rested on two six-inch nails driven into the walls. There was a pillow stuffed with feathers, the long quills sticking out so as to get one up in time for the train in the morning."

"No alarm clocks required, eh?"

"I didn't need one, anyway. I slept on the floor, or tried to. As I heard gentlemen on each side of the walls I gave up all thoughts of the kimono and usual tub. Still, I was not alarmed. The policeman said to me before going to bed, 'Don't worry, a woman is safer on the prairie than in Leicester Square. These are rough fellows, but they know the laws. A woman is never annoyed when there's a North-West policeman about.'"

"Quite true," I said.

"*Very* true, as I have since found out. One can go anywhere in this rather lonely country. Your prestige is tremendous. It is so comforting to a woman."

"Glad to hear it. But carry on. I'm awfully interested in how you explain things."

"The policeman, who was most kind, hired an Indian driver to bring me on here. And what a drive! The road was all tree-stumps, sloughs, mud, and riddled with gopher holes. Jim, however, could drive, and drive furiously. Fortunately I am a bit of an acrobat and managed to hang on, sometimes almost by my eyelids. At Dickson Corner I changed into the mail coach driven by such a dear old half-breed Indian called Jock Mamurchie. A most interesting character. He insisted that he came from Aberfoyle and that his

mother's name was Macgregor. He didn't know anything about the war dance, but he said his father, a Hudson Bay factor, had taught him to play the bagpipes, eat haggis, and drink whisky. He was awfully disappointed when I said I didn't carry any firewater with me. So the drive was most interesting. He took me across the Gopher Creek, right through the Indian Reserve, mile after mile of uncultivated land, with Indian log huts and tiny gardens at regular intervals. We had tea with the Anglican missionary."

"Good fellows, aren't they?"

"Delightful man this one. He didn't seem to mind the isolation. The Indians looked on him as a little father, and his wife was so nice to the children. These were Cree Indians. Like the Highlander they have soft voices and speak English beautifully, due, I imagine, to the teaching of the missionaries, the majority of whom are University men. And I do like the Indians. They are so dignified, so gentle, so courteous. Unfortunately, the pure-bred Indians are dying out. On the Reserve half-breeds predominate. Some are really handsome, so handsome that an artist would be tempted to stay. Others are Mongolian in their features, showing traces of the Eskimo or Japanese."

"I think the Scotch half-breeds are the best, don't you?"

"Yes, they have a fine physique and have more

character. At the stopping-place *en route* here it was an Indian who ran the post office, just a splendid man, so prosperous, and able to write a better letter than any man in the district."

"How did you feel on landing here?" I inquired.

"Not happy at first. The school was not quite finished, this house was also unfinished. I had nowhere to go, at least I could see no suitable place. All were foreigners with the exception of one English-speaking family. But news travels in Canada. All along the trail people were expecting me; this was almost uncanny. The English-speaking family, therefore, conceived it was their duty to offer bed, board, and hospitality. I was most grateful for the offer. My new home was a bare-looking log house pitched in the centre of a chaotic farmyard—ploughs, logs, sleighs, chickens, cows, dogs, and children seemed to litter the place. Inside, the walls were bare and unfinished. There was a table-bench, cooking-stove, pots and pans, five children, and a voluble mother."

"Not the Ritz, eh?"

"Hardly. . . . A partition had been hastily erected across one end of the kitchen and the best of the furniture put in for me. Really they were most kind, and I honestly tried to make them believe I was used to it all. I used to advocate the simple life when I was at Oxford. I'm not so keen on

it now. Five months in a shack makes one think. Still, I do believe it was a priceless lesson. Now I understand all the joys and sorrows of plodding homesteaders. I used to grouse quite a lot about my digs in Oxford. Never again. Canada inoculates one with horse sense and humility."

"How are they getting on here?"

"Not bad at all, but I think this bush country suits the foreigner better. It's just like Quebec and Nova Scotia in the old days. Every acre has to be cleared of bush and stumps, but once it is cleared it is wonderful soil. The Germans and Galicians come here without a penny. In a few years they have most comfortable homes, twenty head of cattle and twenty acres of crops. While their farms are small the men work away on the railways and roads, the women doing the work of the farms. I never saw such women to work. Strange, too, it does not affect the children. They have beautiful children, and they are so bright. The women are just wonderful at garden work. I have never seen such excellent vegetables and fruit as they grow. All the same, I do think the foreigner makes his wife a beast of burden. Nevertheless, it suits the country in the pioneering stage. The next generation can do the fox-trot if they wish."

"How do they take to school?" I inquired, very much interested in this young woman's ways.

"The first few days were trying. A few small Galician children arrived. They would not speak, look up, or move; just hung their heads and seemed rooted to the ground. Not a word of English did they understand. I felt baffled and thought about cabling to Harrods for a car-load of aspirin. . . . At the end of the week I had eleven of them. Something had to be done. So I drew horses, cows, pigs, and hens on the board. Then I made them name each drawing in their own tongue; when they did so I immediately gave them the English name and made them repeat and repeat it. For days they were running round the Valley shouting 'orse,' 'peeg,' 'cow,' and so on. Of course, they were awfully shy, and I had to win them with smiles and tender caresses, but once started in school they are remarkably keen. They love books, pictures, and the gramophone, for they know nothing of the arts at home. I was astonished how their faces rapidly changed from the dullness of serfdom to confidence and laughter. The job is not to get them into school, but to get them to go home. Sometimes when I tell them to put their things away they ask, 'Is it home time?' 'Yes, children, it is four o'clock.' 'That's too soon, teacher; we will stay till five o'clock,' and they stay."

"A high compliment to you."

"All in the day's work," was her modest

answer. "Here are little paintings my sister made of the children."

"How pretty!" I said.

"Yes, and don't they love gaudy colours, startling beads, rings, and ear-rings? They all go barefooted till it becomes too cold. In winter they wear moccasins and round their legs and ankles they wrap strips of cloth. The women go barefooted, but not the men. They are the sultans and gentlemen of the show. It is not unusual for a woman to be out in the barn working barefooted when her baby is only two days old. Most of them have large families. A certain Dan, on being congratulated on the arrival of a new son, remarked complacently, 'Yes, I have ten children; verra goot for Cana-dar, eh?' They are mostly Greek Roman Catholics, and have weird religious pictures in their houses, all surrounded with artificial flowers and coloured papers."

"Do the older people take an interest in the school?"

"Not at first."

"Why?"

"They were up against the taxes."

"But they are not high."

"No, only thirty dollars to a quarter section" (60 acres). "Still, they raised a storm and wanted to close the school. But later on, when they saw how the children were progressing, they brought me

gifts of fruit, flowers, and cakes to show that they had changed their views. The whole tone of the district has changed. When I came the atmosphere was almost as low as that of Little Russia. But the children have roused the ambitions of the parents."

"Or you have," I suggested.

"I only do my part. And it is so nice to be able to mould a fresh community to one's will. Our dances are great fun. They come in their ox-wagons over the most fearful roads. All the babies are packed in rows along the floor to sleep. They always invite 'Missis Teacher' to the ball. I do enjoy it. The men are most polite."

"Doesn't the winter worry you?"

"At first it did, but my sister, who is an artist, now keeps the house for me. The silence at first was appalling. Nothing but snow, and yet the cold is bracing. One feels awfully fit up here in the winter. But we were a little panic-stricken when we heard the wolves howling at night, or a stray dog snuffing at the door. My word, I *did* want to go home. When the snow melted in spring, we found the school surrounded by miniature lakes, and the kiddies had to wade almost up to their waists. I used to stand by to hook them out. But summer dried the pools up, and we found the house almost hidden by rich and wonderful foliage. The most beautiful birds came to visit us. One

day a prairie chicken led a brood of ten little chicks past the cottage door. This was a fearfully exciting event in our simple routine. But only one bird stayed with us all winter; that was the little black-and-white chickadie."

"Awfully interesting; but you must miss a chat with an educated person."

"At first I did, but now I have so many pet schemes running, and over head and ears in little worries concerning babies, measles, sewing, knitting, music, and so on, that I have really no time to become introspective. Work is a grand thing. And I think Dr. Thornton's idea of making the teacherage a centre of light and joy is a fine scheme. Every Sunday I hold my court. At times my kitchen is packed with mothers and children making their calls. The women often bring me presents of saurkraut, onions, cream, eggs, and potatoes; these presents are often inside woollen caps and shawls also meant for me. When they first came the only English the women have is 'one dollar,' pointing to my dress, my blouse, or myself. However, they get on, and I find my price rising to ten dollars, which is cheering."

"Have they taken to art?"

"Oh yes."

"That ought to encourage your sister."

"It does. The little children go to the bush and gather the most lovely wild flowers; these

they bring into the kitchen and wait while my sister paints them. We have a budding artist here, a girl called Dora. Poor girl, she is deaf and dumb, but so clever at painting and modelling. And so strong! Her father's stable was burnt down. Dora went out to the bush with an axe, cut down the great big logs, carried them in on her own back, and built a splendid stable all on her own. She is really wonderful. I am trying so hard to get her sent to Winnipeg for art lessons."

"Have you a piano?"

"Unfortunately, no. Still we manage to give them tit-bits on the gramophone. They love music and singing. I wanted so much to teach the little ones Humpty Dumpty. But I had no picture of Humpty Dumpty, so I blew a big white duck's egg; my sister painted a face on it, giving Dumpty a black silk tie. She also painted a cardboard box to resemble a wall and set Mr. Humpty on it. The children were quite fascinated. Next day at 8 o'clock (an hour and a half before school) we found half a dozen children at the door with duck eggs. Their plea was, 'Please, teacher, we want Humpty Dumpty on *our* eggs.' We painted twenty-two eggs for them. Their simplicity is delightful."

"Is that one of your other tricks over there?" I said, pointing to a cardboard clock.

"Yes. Our people don't have clocks; they go

by the sun. I made a lot of little clocks to teach them the time; these they have on their desks, and they turn the hands to what hour they think it is. Going by the sun is rather awkward. On a dull day I have known some of them arrive at school before 8 o'clock and some at 9.30. They said they could not see the sun but thought it was time to go to school."

"Your problems are many, teacher. I do like your pluck. Now have you any complaints?"

"No complaints whatever, only memories of complaints. For instance, when the cold weather came, the fuel question had not been settled. We all had to go out and collect wood for the stove, just as the little boys in Scotland used to carry peats for the school fire. But when the snow was heavy, I had to get into my gum boots and saw, saw, saw. It was hard, still it kept one warm, and certainly kept me fit. I have an arm like Sandow now. And we have no well, so we rigged up a tank and carry water from the slough. In winter, like all other Canadians do, we melt the snow for household purposes. But in summer the mosquitoes and flies almost bite me to death. Still, I love the life. The people are so kind. It is a wonderful country."

"I think these children are fortunate in their teacher," I said.

"Oh, I don't know; I am not the only one."

There are hundreds doing the same. I claim no honours, although I am very, very proud of my little ones and my school. Would you like to see their funny letters ? ”

“ Yes, I would,”

The teacher handed me the following amusing epistles. Each letter was in its way a testimonial to her kindness and love.

Man.

May 19th.

“ DEAR TEACHER,

This is our first letter.

I have 17 chickens and 6 ducks. I have 19 cattle. My baby's name is Rosie. My mother said you Teacher very good Teacher. I have four cows. My cows are on the prairie. My mother has 7 children. My father has two pigs.

With love from KATIE C——N.”

* * * *

Man.

June.

“ DEAR TEACHER,

I am writing to you a letter.

This is our first letter to you. I like to write to Teacher a letter. My flowers are getting red and white and pink. When the school is open I will go and meet Teacher. When my father come back home I will go with my father to Teacher's place. I can find Teacher's house when I will know I will come when my father show me the road. I will bring Teacher some eggs to-morrow morning.”

* * * *

Man.

June.

"DEAR TEACHER,

I am writing to you a letter. The children picked for teacher a lot of strawberries. Marcella's and Mary's dogs was fighting yesterday. I brought some strawberries. Do you like strawberries? I like strawberries. There are in the school 19 children. With love from ANNIE M——.

Age 8 years."

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Man.

June.

"DEAR TEACHER,

I am writing to you a letter.
I like to come to school and write.
I am going to go to Hodgson.
My peas and bean grow very big.
With love from

BILLY B——.

Age 8 years."

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Man,

June.

"DEAR TEACHER,

I am writing to you a letter.
This is a letter.

Do you know my dog? My dog was fighting and I stard to crying. I have a little girl and a little boy in the house. I have some clothes at home in the house.

MARY C——.

Age 8 years."

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Man,
June.

"DEAR TEACHER,

To-day is Wednesday. I am going to write a letter to you. To-day is a very nice day. I like to write a letter to you. I like teacher. Teacher is going home to-morrow. I brought some strawberries for you. I can milk the cows. I have got some little oxens. They are very nice. I was going to store yesterday. I brought some candies for children and they like that. I saw two squirrels in the tree. I have a little bird in my nests.

YENNEE W—.

Age 11 years."

* * * *

"Most interesting," I said, handing the letters back to her. "I must congratulate you. You are a real pioneer. It's women like you we need out here. And I'm so glad you're keeping up the Oxford end of things. By Jove, I am delighted to have met you," and I put out my hand to say good-bye.

"It is so kind of you," she said with evident emotion.

"Not at all, but I hope you will not stay here all your life."

"Why?"

"There's surely a fireside and a good man for you."

"I imagine there is."

" Oh ! "

" Yes," and she grinned.

" A Galician ? "

" No."

" A German ? "

" No."

" I give it up."

" A North-West Mounted policeman."

" Lucky dog."

CHAPTER XIV

THE FIGHTING PARSONS

"Go ye unto all the world and preach the Gospel," was the command of the Saviour to the Apostles. The Apostles have kept their bond. The Cross has kept pace with the shovel and the sword. I have found the parson in the most unlikely place. He was always cheerful, always a gentleman.

In the Rocky Mountains I recently stumbled on a little church. The parson, a most charming gentleman, Mr. Thomson (of Glasgow), showed me round. It was a real old-timers' church, built of wood, with the big stove in the middle. Mr. Thomson said to me—

"Do you know who preached here?"

"No," I answered.

"Ralph Connor, the great Canadian novelist."

This was in the long ago when Ralph was poor and unknown. This at once recalled my first meeting with Ralph Connor. Some years before I happened to be spending a few days' leave in Winnipeg. While chewing cigars and studying

the faces of American and Canadian drummers in the lounge, I was astonished and delighted to see a man enter the hotel in the costume of a Highland officer—feather bonnet, red coat, plaid, trews, and spurs! My heart thrilled. This was a sight for the gods.

"Who is that?" I asked a friend.

"Ralph Connor, Chaplain of the Winnipeg Highlanders."

"By Jove! I must shake hands," I said, going forward.

Ralph was most courteous to me and invited me to his house, where I saw his library and in his office an army of charming typists who worked at his manuscripts. I also heard him preach, but I must own that he is more charming at an informal chat. In his books he has performed a lasting service to the men who made the West. He is a very great novelist. But Canada is mean with praise. Somehow success does not receive the official recognition due. It's the old story. "A prophet has no honour in his own country." When he's dead they'll weep about him. What a lopsided scheme! It was the same with Burns, Shelley, and Crockett. I do hope Canada will do the right thing in time. Genius is scarce in new countries. All the more reason why Canada should hail this brilliant son of Glengarry.

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Strange how one strikes names famous in history and the ballads of the brave. The Rollos are famous people in Scottish Society. My father had soldiered with one of the Rollos in a famous Highland regiment. One day, in a little one-eyed prairie town I met a tall, grizzled-looking gentleman in clerical attire. He had such a bold eye, such a fine moustache, that I divined the soldier under the cloth. We chatted together for some time till a friend of mine, Colin Campbell, came along and introduced the parson as "Mr. Rollo, the Minister of Fort Qu'appelle."

"Were you in the Black Watch?" I inquired.

"No; the Scots Greys."

"By Jove!" I said, "it's remarkable how one meets people out here."

Rollo was an officer in the Scots Greys, one of the crack cavalry regiments of the British Army. But the Church always called him, so he took Orders and became Assistant Military Chaplain to the famous Padre Robertson, D.S.O., the minister who figured so gallantly at the battle of Magersfontein. Then he came to the West. For twenty years he had roughed it like a man. And he loved the life. His experiences as a cavalry officer were of great value in the handling of horses. But he was rather annoyed that the young brilliant men in the Church of Scotland at home did not come West and help on the great

work. Like all old-timers he feels the youngsters are getting soft. How different to the men of the Covenant, when they went out with the broad claymore and hacked the meat off the drunken Hanoverian troopers!

* * *

Bishop Lloyd of Saskatoon is another remarkable personality. This was the man who led the famous Barr Colony from disaster to success. A Moses of the West! The only Bishop of the Church of England who has given a benediction to soda-water instead of Johnnie Walker. The only Bishop who believes in Moody and Sankey, and "Won't you be saved to-night?" He preaches the Gospel as Wesley did, and shocks the curates of Oxford by his unorthodox sermons. The gaiters, apron, and top hat held up with black strings fulfil their true function on Bishop Lloyd, for these were designed in the days of riding bishops. And Lloyd can ride anything from a broken-kneed cayuse to a liver-eating broncho. He knows the West. He is the sort of man the Rev. B. S. Batty talks about who gave out that the address next Sunday would be on "Hell," and that Mr. Jones would sing, "Tell Mother I'll be there."

Bishop Lloyd talks about Bill Brown and Jack Green, not about "souls," as they do in the Palaces of Durham, York, and Lambeth, which prevents him putting his foot in it like the famous

preacher on tour who addressed his audiences as "Dear Manchester Souls," "Dear Bradford Souls," and convulsed an Irish audience by addressing them as "Dear Cork Souls."

But the Bishop has done yeoman service by adapting the hitherto inflexible and conventional code of the Church of England to the needs of the prairie. And he is a good judge of men. I used to meet one of his curates, "Long John of Saskatoon," a graduate of Durham, six foot six high, and hands like a boxer. "Long John" had a couple of old horses and a mud-spattered four-wheeler. He drove round the prairie smoking an old pipe. Between puffs he convinced backsliders by his own excellent physique and weight-lifting performances that God was really a better investment than bad baccy and booze. He insisted that the coming of the Lord need not be heralded as—

"Hi! Hi! Hi!
Here comes the Bogey Man."

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Professor Edmonds of Edmonton University is like the Hon. Frank Oliver, a living example that culture can survive in the West. The Professor is in Holy Orders.

"'E isn't very big
But 'e's 'andy for 'is size.
'E can kill an' cut a pig—
Knock a bucking broncho wise."

To listen to this quiet-voiced gentleman holding forth on the charms of Shakespeare, the Odes of Horace, beauties of Wordsworth, and attractiveness of Shelley and Byron, one would never imagine that he had ridden the ranges, punched cows, and rustled for his grub in the bad lands of Montana. But he has smoked his pipe in lone parts ; followed the spoor of buffaloes, wild horses, and boundary marauders ; taught the children of the Mormons, and, in the doing of all these things, acquired a wonderful knowledge of the West. It is fortunate that Canada has such men. They quietly pare away the claws of men with the yellow streak, and convince red-nosed sceptics that there is something in "The Book" and a sweetness in literature.

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The most beautiful Presbyterian churches in the West are in Fort William, Moose Jaw, and Calgary. I worshipped once in the Knox Church, Calgary. How dignified it seemed ! Such a beautiful interior ! The solid handiwork of a solid congregation. Listening to that odd-looking but remarkable personality, the Rev. J. Macartney Wilson, D.D., was a pleasure and inspiration. He fits the West, yet is above it. And it is well that in this rough-and-ready country there are fearless men who wrap their fearlessness in the language of saints and scholars. He carries the mantle of Knox,

but, unlike Knox, he knows that at times there must be mercy, even compromise. Adaptability has not always been a feature of Presbyterianism. But if religion is to survive in the West it can only be done by luring the devil and handling his throat as if you were going to kiss him, but all the while tightening the grip till you have choked him into death and damnation.

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Moose Jaw has in that sturdy divine, the Rev. J. Macgregor, a man who, like Bishop Macdonnell of Glengarry, would people the land with the Highland host. While he knows the value of industrious foreigners from Europe, he sees that if Canada is to fulfil her part in the Anglo-Saxon world, it can only be done by the supremacy of British blood. It was the Scots who forged the way in this Western country, the Scots must ever guard the gate. They are so sure, they will stand like the Roman sentinels of Pompeii, and they have the will to resist the seeming grandeur of those baubles purveyed by Jews and cosmopolitans who are mere birds of passage, suckers of blood, grafters for gold and *not* lovers of the land, the homestead, and all that is dear to those who smell glory in the furrow and dignity behind the plough.

The Macgregors were always men.

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The Rev. R. G. Macbeth of Vancouver, like the famous McKinnons of Regina and Fort William, represents all that is best in the Canadian Highlander. Mr. Macbeth, like Macdonnell of Glengarry, is a fighting parson; he carried a sword as an officer of the Winnipeg Light Infantry in the Riel Rebellion. He has ridden the plains, and known the trails of the North-West Mounted Police, and he is the greatest historian of the Force. Yes, blood does tell. He is a son of those who settled at the Red River in the early days. Through the toil and sweat of the long, hard pioneering days that he himself has also experienced, he has kept his faith, fought the good fight, and has honoured the Land o' the Gael.

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The part played by the Methodists I also know. They have the stuff of Wesley. As in America they lead, their creed fits in with the trend of democracy. And somehow they find the men, fine young men who could smile when the saloon, in the old days, threatened to pull their work down. On the loneliest trails I have met them. In the far North I have watched them toil, suffer, and sometimes die. To omit the services these and other ministers of all denominations have rendered would be a wilful closure of the brightest page of history. Their problems to-day are even greater than in the past. But no

responsible man should stand in the way of the Cross.

* * * *

The children of the manse occupy high places in the West. They are born clean. They are kept clean. High living and low thinking is not their part. As a rule they honour "Mum" and "Dad." Not so long ago I met a daughter of the manse, Miss Farquharson by name. Handsome, studious, as shy as a deer, and tongue-tied, as all prairie children are. But when the ice was broken it was pleasant indeed to hear her speak of her fine old parents way back on the prairie. How, like the Vicar of Wakefield, he was passing rich on but a few pounds a year. The father was the stern ward of the Church and the Covenant, Defender of the Faith, Guardian of all that is high and dear. Rigid, so very rigid, but high, honourable, and proud. The dignity that such a man sheds on his part compels the scorner to lie low. And her mother, one of those dear mothering women who shield the community as Ralph Connor's mother did. To the manse they came for help, for succour, for consolation in the time of death and disaster.

I listened, attentive and enraptured. It was finer by far than the story of Peter Pan, sweeter than the brook, and meat for a hundred lofty sermons. Somehow the poverty of the manse was submerged in the goodness and godliness of

the task. It made one pause, it made one think before leaping again into the fleshpots of Egypt. If religion can create such men, and keep them, if religion can soothe away anger, murder, and rebellion as ministers and priests have done in the West, then there surely is something in religion. And this pretty girl, child of faith and purity, with her bag empty of dollars, and only a University degree to carry her forward in the new task she was embracing, surely she emphasised that it is good to be mothered in a manse and nurtured in godliness.

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A policeman is no angel. But I have always honoured and respected the Church. After days on the trail, when things were hard and surroundings coarse, as these are at times, it was good to strike a prairie town and meet a parson. Good, too, to enter one of these little wooden churches. I remember such a visit to a small church in Saskatchewan. The visiting clergyman was an old vicar just out from home. He was a martyr to rheumatism, walking with the aid of sticks, but a fine patriarchal figure. There was a light in his eye and hope in his face: he looked more of a Moses than a gloomy dean: his whole bearing endorsed the opening hymn—

“We love the place, O God,
Wherein Thine honour dwells;
The joy of Thine abode
All earthly joy excels.”

And then the dear old man sat down on a chair and gave us a sermon in the conversational style. "It is good for us to be here," he quoted from the Old Book. Like the Prophet of old, he went over the ills and sins of the world. He was not brilliant: there were no flashes of wit or genius. To the tired man of the world he might have appeared as a horrible bore, but I found something paternal, peaceful, kindly. That morning I had been thinking of the dear folks at home; my mood was tender and thoughtful at the time, for I am of the Celtic brood. And in this little prairie town I had found what I sought in the cities—that something which warms, soothes, and satisfies. This is not the stuff to write according to our cosmopolitan code. I ought really to be dealing with low necks, cocktails, and cigars. But in the history of Canada the part of the Church has been great but forgotten. We are apt to glorify the noisy owner of ten million dollars instead of those quiet, cultured, gentle souls of all denominations, who have written Faith, Hope, and Charity across the prairie lands.

CHAPTER XV

“ EVIDENCE ”

REG. No. 7905, Constable Rayner, H. J., states as follows :—

“ I have been in charge of the Lac Du Bonnet Detachment since the 24th March last. I consider Horse Reg. No. 1919 a very dangerous animal to ride and unfit for use in the Force as a saddle horse. On three different occasions this horse has jumped into the Winnipeg River with me on his back. On the 23rd April, 1922, I was on patrol to Point Du Bois and was crossing the bridge over the Winnipeg River which is built for traffic as well as for railway purposes, when a train, not on the same track, whistled, which caused this horse to jump 20 ft. down into the river in 25 ft. of water. I got off his back when I hit the water, and by dropping behind him and holding his tail I managed to swim to shore, which is a distance of 300 yards. I did not submit a report about the matter, as I considered I could eventually master him.

“ On one occasion I was at Great Falls on the Winnipeg River and blasting was going on. I

was riding horse Reg. No. 1919, and upon an explosion taking place, about half a mile away, he took the bit in his teeth and headed for the river. I did my best to stop him, but could not do so, and he jumped off the bank 5 ft. into 30 ft. of water with me on his back; I clung to the side of the saddle, and the horse swam back to shallow water.

"At the beginning of the month of April I was at St. George on patrol regarding Inland Revenue. I was intending to tie horse 1919 in the bush while I searched a house; directly he saw the river he ran straight into it. I managed to jump from his back as he hit the water and get out; the horse swam out amongst the floating ice about 25 ft., and then turned round and came back. On each of these occasions as soon as I got him out of the water I got him into a stable, and no bad results as far as his health was concerned took place. He is very stubborn when under the saddle, although he is very quiet in the stable, and is a good driver. He has a vicious habit of bucking and will rear and throw himself over backwards.

"On the 25th of April he had the saddle on and I was mounted ready to start on patrol. He dashed down the lane at the back of the stable with the bit in his teeth, bucking viciously all the way, and on this occasion he reared and came right back and struck his eye on a fence post, which has blinded him in the left eye. I am pretty certain if this horse is used for saddle work he will hurt some one badly. The reason I did not report

the incidents when he ran into the river with me, is because I thought I could eventually master the horse, and as he is a good-looking animal and can stand a lot of hard work, I considered that if he was broken of his vicious habits he would be just the kind of horse for that country, which is hard to get around in.

(signed) H. J. RAYNER, Const.
Reg. No. 7905.

CHAPTER XVI

"WHITE MEN"

ONE day I happened to be on the train going from Calgary to Regina. I was passing along the corridor *en route* to the dining-car when a tall, pale, handsome man, minus an arm, said, "Hello, Charlie."

"I'm afraid you have me at a disadvantage," I replied.

"You don't know me?" he exclaimed, smiling.

"Not at the moment."

"Thomson! . . . Thomson!" he said.

"Thomson? . . . Thomson?" I muttered.

"Yes."

"I'm beat."

"Can't you recall the scrap of the 4th of June?"

"Good Heavens! You're not Thomson?"

"Yes," he exclaimed.

"I thought you were dead. When I saw you last in a pool of blood, your arm all shattered—I thought it was all up."

"Not yet, old chap."

"What are you doing now?"

"I'm a lawyer in Saskatchewan."

"Excellent. . . . Come, and have a meal, will you?"

"Certainly."

We went along together, and at the table renewed memories of one of Britain's wars in which Thomson and I had played a little part. Meeting him brought a flood of memories, half joyful, half sad, for many of the men we knew lay skeletons on a far frontier. Yet Thomson was as happy as of yore, when his arm did not worry him, for he still had that strange feeling peculiar to armless warriors—that the arm was there.

But he was not quite the same Thomson. He had suffered much, he was pale, at times he seemed morose; this is the way of the Legion of the Brave. And how well I remembered the brave fellow coming on board the troopship, a Beau Brummel in khaki jacket and tartan breeches, with such an arresting white helmet, a faultless monocle; truly a splendid captain of His Majesty's Highland Light Infantry. On the voyage he was always happy, ever gay, always ready for a game at bridge or cheerful rag. Thomson was unattached, one of a group of men of the Lost Legion, who had come from the uttermost ends of the earth to lead the armies of the King. There was "Tubby," the ugliest man in

Rhodesia, ten medals on his breast, face and body scarred with small-pox and bullets, and modest memories of scraps with Lobengula's braves. Cunningham, too, the old blood of the Scottish Rifles, so handsome, so courtly, who had been seeking rubber in Java and tea in Siam. "Jim," the parson's son, with only the chest of a bantam and the voice of a girl, but who died at the head of a company with his hands round the throat of an enemy. How these memories rushed on me when I looked at pale, brave Thomson eating his dinner with one arm!

This was the Thomson who defied the rules of a little expedition which decreed all must wear khaki helmets. Thomson, for reasons which I suspect had to do with the methods of the dandy, declined to wear any such mud-coloured chapeau. There is nothing so ugly in all the world as a solemn khaki helmet, weighed down with a pugaree resembling ruffled old stockings. And so he came in his white helmet, landed too, and marched at the head of a company into the jaws of death.

We prophesied death for Thomson.

And how we watched him through the glasses! The troops were attacking a fortified hill, crammed with snipers, machine-guns, and fanatical marksmen. All seemed to go well when the troops got out and deployed. The lines were fairly even, the sergeants were true to type and kept up that old

old cry, "March by the right," you b——s, march by the right."

And then the Boom! . . . Swish! . . . BANG!

Oh God, it was fearful to behold! Those flashes of fire, the *crack*, a pause, then the mind-disturbing roar as death was sprinkled over the land.

The line staggered, halted, and some men hit the ground.

"Checked," we muttered.

"No, they're going on," some one said.

"Yes, I see Thomson. . . . Look! . . . He's waving them on," a major shouted. Sure enough that prime Beau Brummel of the mess deck and the square was at the head of the van, the white helmet the peak of a khaki convoy, the symbol of gallantry and pride.

But the going was slow, and death was sure.

Boom! . . . Swish! . . . BANG!

Boom!

Boom!

Boom!

Z . . . r . . . r . . . p! . . . Z . . . r . . . r . . . p!
cracked that devil's device, the machine-gun.

"Checked again!" the General muttered anxiously.

"It's murder," mumbled the A.D.C.

"It may be, but it's war," was the sharp retort.

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"They're moving again," I said.

" Yes, I think they'll get through," said the G.O.C.

" I hope so. I hope so," muttered the sensitive. .
A.D.C.

Boom ! . . . Swish ! . . . BANG !

Boom !

Boom !

BOOM ! went a new huge gun.

The carnage was fearful. The thin lines crumpled up. Men went into the air. Others staggered and bit the dust. Some threw up their arms in that haunting way which we see on the battlefield. Our hearts were panting fast. There was grief in our souls. We thought of them all, and we thought of Thomson, so careless, so happy, ah ! so brave !

* * * *

Ting . . . a . . . ling went the telephone again.

" Yes," said the General, now very pale.

" Advance stopped, sir. I don't think we can get through."

" You must," said the stern G.O.C. Well he knew that in the history of wars advances are often checked, but dogged courage triumphs as it did at Waterloo.

" We can't without the reserves, sir," said a voice respectful but insistent.

" Very well, I will throw them in."

"May I lead them, sir?" asked the gallant British gentleman, realising that men must not be asked to charge the impregnable without the sacrifice of the High Command.

"Yes, you may," said the G.O.C., turning paler still, and now realising that that request would not have been made unless the attack looked like a tragic finale. But he had said, "Go in." He had said he would throw in the reserves. And in his constitution was that mulishness—so British—which in a crisis holds to original orders rather than countermanding them and looking weak before observant eyes. Still, Wellington won. Roberts won. There was always a chance. . . . Always a chance.

* * * *

Out filtered the reserves.

Like little ants they seemed running and crawling. Rough lines of attack they formed. All seemed ready. We saw a figure ahead, walking, yes, walking calmly to the head. So cool! So brave! Ah, so fine!

This was Colonel W——.

He waved his arm.

Up rose the struggling lines of men.

From out of the lines of the maimed a white helmet also arose. The helmet seemed to wobble as if carried by a staggering man.

"It's Thomson! It's Thomson!"

" Yes, so it is."

The white helmet gave us hope.

Boom. . . . S . . . w . . . i . . . s . . . h . . . BANG.

Boom !

Boom !

BOOM !

Death swathed through the lines.

Shrieks and curses came filtering through the
air.

Colonel W—— was down.

The survivors were retiring.

It was finished.

Away on the hillside the white helmet lay still.

" Good God, he's dead ! "

* * * *

All night worked the army of surgeons.

Long, long lines of moaning came in.

The faces were pale, harrowed, bleeding, and
done.

On stretchers came the mangled.

And on stretchers came the dying and the dead.

At times like these one wonders why man
invented war. Why men made in the image of
God should be sent to death in the shambles. A
horrible suspicion sweeps over one's mind, and
one doubts the Orders of Bishops, Captains, and
Kings.

* * * *

Late that night a stretcher came in.

An officer ! Pale, ah, so pale ! Unconscious !

His tunic was smothered in blood.

His arm lay like pulp at his side.

" Good God ! It's Thomson ! "

We hurried on ; we thought he was dead.

* * * *

Yet here was Thomson.

So courtly, so kind, so sensitive.

Thomson of Edinburgh ; Captain of the School.

Thomson, a captain in the H.L.I.

Thomson, the brother of Harold Thomson the novelist.

Thomson, the modest son of a thoughtless Empire.

Brave Thomson of Saskatchewan.

* * * *

II

Canada is the Land of Romance.

My duties once led me to the Royal Military College, Kingston, that is the Sandhurst of Canada, but a much more useful place. Men do four years at Kingston. When they leave they are able to carry the King's Commission, build a bridge, drive a train, run a warehouse, a government, a war, and stop a revolution with ham sandwiches, a telephone, and a smile.

A wonderful school is Kingston.

I went to Kingston to see an old police officer,

Major-General Sir Archibald Cameron Macdonnell, a son of Canada, a man who was with the police in the early days. Sitting Bull, the terrible Indian warrior who mangled General Custer and his men, did not frighten "Archie" when they met at a Police Post. Sitting Bull did not want to go back to U.S.A. He wanted to squat in Canada; he felt safer there, and knew the Mounted Police would not handle him so tactlessly as General Custer did.

"No go back," said Sitting Bull.

"You've got to," declared Archie.

"No," insisted the chief.

"You must."

"You make me?" he said, his lips curling.

"Yes," was the grim reply.

"I go. . . . I go. . . . You give me blankets, food?"

"Certainly."

And so Sitting Bull went.

* * * *

To meet Sir Archibald is to meet a fine type of Canadian gentleman. His name, too, recalls a mine of romance. Blood surely tells. He is one of the House of Macdonnell of Glengarry, famous in song and story, more famous for its noble part in that ill-starred expedition, the Rebellion of Forty-Five. The Duke of Cumberland crushed the Highland host. For long the Highlands was

a living hell for all who had been "out." The Highlander was disarmed. The kilt was banished. The plaid, the dirk, and skeindhu were no more. A brutal order from a brutish mind. But what could one expect from the House of Hanover?

Sick of terror, filled with loathing for the drunken Hanoverian troopers, and despising the methods of the Campbells who always fought on the winning side, the Macdonnells sailed to America, settling in Mohawk Valley. The House of Hanover slept when they had gone, but the same House of Hanover gladly availed themselves of their services to uphold the Crown in America, there to fight the Indians, the French, and the army of George Washington. America knows the Royal Highlanders. George Washington feared them too. The Macdonnells opposed the War of Independence, which may seem strange, seeing that they had been in rebellion; but the Highlander is feudal, even to this day. The Clan system is the King system. They have no use for Presidents in mufti or Senators in jeans. Aristocratic to the finger-tips: only under a Monarchy will they serve. All this seems strange in these days of horny-handed legislators and soap-box M.P.'s. But that is the way of the Macdonnells, and that is why they fought their way out of America under the banner of the United Empire Loyalists, and found in Glengarry, Ontario, a refuge from Republicanism.

To Glengarry came six hundred more Macdonnells from Glengarry, Inverness-shire; these men were led by the fighting Bishop, the Rev. Alexander Macdonnell, one of the noblest men in Canadian history. When Alexander was unable by the shouts of war to say masses for his people, he out with the claymore and fought with the Glengarry Fencibles in the war of 1812. Glengarry has really been an arsenal for warriors. It is the home of manly men.

From the census of 1852 Colonel Alexander Chisholm (according to J. Murray Gibbon) classified the various Highland Clans at that time traceable in Glengarry as follows:—

Macdonnell and Macdonald	3228
McMillan	545
McDougall	541
McRae	456
McLeod	437
Grant	415
Cameron	399
McGillis	359
Kennedy	333
McLennon	322
Campbell	304
McIntosh	262
McGillivray	243
McKinnon	242
McPherson	195

Fraser ..	176
McPhee ..	157
McIntyre ..	140.
Ross ..	139
Chisholm ..	133
McGregor ..	114
Ferguson ..	110
McLaren ..	102
McKenzie ..	99
Morrison ..	99
McCormick ..	83
McMartin ..	72
McRay ..	72
McArthur ..	70
McLauchlan ..	68
Cattanach ..	50

These names and figures surely rouse the admiration of the Celt. And how many romantic figures have come from this Canadian county!

~~Ralph Connor was born there, and he is no mean~~ novelist. The West is littered with the achievements of the Clans. For Canada, aye, for the Empire, this Glengarry has given of its best. In these days of dollars, self-seeking, dope, and jazz, it is good to turn away from the nauseating things and rest one's eyes on this historic county. Here is history, great tradition, unselfishness, and noble courage. It is true there are other brave races in this world, but our Highlanders have few equals.

They have ever stood a wall of fire for God, home, and things eternal.

No wonder I felt honoured in meeting this old officer of the Royal North-West Mounted Police, Sir Archibald Cameron Macdonnell. A pioneer. A soldier of fortune. A Jacobite, maybe, but a glorious servant of His Majesty when'er he took the field. More than that, a student, lover of books, and dreamer of dreams for his own dear Canada.

As we journeyed through this old Military College, so rich in noble memories, so fruitful of manly men and chivalrous ideals, I felt sure I was in touch with a Canadian super-man. Not the super-man we see on the movies with a gross face, puckered lips, a vile cigar, and a glint of hell in his eyes; but a courteous Highland gentleman who by his record, example, diplomacy, and tact was determined to give to Canadians of English and French extraction all that was good for enrichment of the mind and the steeling of the will.

Canada, like Britain, has often failed to find the super-man, but surely it was an inspiration when the Canadian Government sent him here. I had often worried about the future of Canada. In my travels I had sought for the ideal school which was to breed the men who would take the load, and then the lead in Public Service. Of all

the schools in Canada, this is the best. Not because it is a military school. Heaven forbid! But here men are gruelled and go through "the mills of God" which "grind slowly, but they grind exceedingly small." Service, not sacrifice!

The connection between Kingston and the police is a close one. Many of the best officers come from here. Perhaps the greatest is Colonel A. B. Perry, the late Commissioner of the Royal North-West Mounted Police. Mention must also be made of the late Assistant Commissioner Z. T. Woods, a most courageous officer, and Colonel Walker of Calgary. Major Worsley, the present Commander of the Depot Regina, is also a graduate. Few equal him for his high sense of duty and open generous heart. If the officers and men made the Royal North-West Mounted Police, it was really Colonel Perry who so ably directed the policy for many years. And Canada is fortunate indeed that the present Commissioner, Colonel Cortlandt Starnes, a gallant officer, now holds the reins. Colonel Starnes is not a graduate; he is a man who has risen from the ranks, all honour to him. If he will insist on more commissions from the ranks he may be able to prevent the menace of inefficient weaklings being pitchforked into commissions. He will understand.

Sir Archibald Macdonnell has, therefore, a high tradition to maintain. He will do so, I am sure.

Upon his work, and the work of the principals of other schools, the destiny of this great country depends. An Etonian always leaves Kingston more humble and more wise.

III

Lady Godiva rode through Coventry.

She was nude, she was beautiful, she was brave.

And this Lady Godiva mothered the brood out of which sprang Sir John Temple, Bart., trooper in the North-West Mounted Police. We only knew him as John Temple: we asked no questions—policemen understand. And this John Temple, a stickler for Empire, was also a stickler for freedom: that is the way of the Temples, that the reason for John Temple going West.

When he joined us he was really an old man, but he was tough and he was brave. The curious members of the Force on looking up the Peerage, saw there that Trooper John Temple was really Sir Granville Louis John Temple, twelfth baronet of Stowe, former lieutenant of Lancashire Fusiliers, was born January 5, 1858, the only son of the eleventh baronet and Marie Avon von Bistren. He succeeded his father in 1860, was educated at Wellington, fell heir to a cousin's estate, and married a daughter of a colonel in the Indian Service. His residence was given as Canada.

The foregoing is surely evidence that we were an interesting bunch, none more interesting than John Temple. And this man, nurtured in luxury, used to command, took to orders, hardship, and danger as the best people usually do. He rode to the north, often he sleighed, seeking the law-breaker, tending the weak, convoying the mad, and sheltering the fatherless. There are homesteaders out in the West who remember this tall, grizzled man riding the plains and asking for "any complaints." There are women who can speak of his kindness in those hours when a child is near and a doctor far away. John Temple was never too tired to mount and ride for "the doc."

When I saw on a hoarding in Toronto some years ago: "No Englishmen need apply," I thought of John Temple, and all the other John Temples who were never too proud to fight, never too proud to die. And having seen John Temple in life, and knowing his work, I ask you is it fair that hard-mouthed fools should ever again stick on a hoarding:

"NO ENGLISHMEN NEED APPLY" ?

IV

The Boer War was not a good war for the police. Somehow our fellows did more than

their share and received little recognition. Major Sanders and Lieutenant Chalmers earned the Victoria Cross in a noble endeavour to rescue Sergeant Tryon out of a dangerous and difficult situation. Chalmers was killed, Sanders severely wounded, that was their reward. The police are modest, we know, but it seems to me that someone blundered about the Honours List.

But Sergeant A. H. L. Richardson was more fortunate. I remember this gallant soldier at the fight at Walverspruit. It was a tough scrap, the fire was fierce and deadly, so deadly that we had to retire. One of our men lay wounded in two places. Richardson, struck by the tragedy of leaving a comrade behind, turned round, and in face of a deadly fire, also hampered by wire, he went back. Richardson's horse was badly wounded, so he could only go at little short of a walking pace. But, like a good policeman, he got his man and carried him back to safety, and so earned the Victoria Cross.

V

The deeds of the prairie often outshine the deeds of war. A prairie fire is a fearful thing and a test of courage. To see the plains ablaze, the sky laden with clouds of smoke, and a wall of fire rushing and roaring down upon you is a sight which haunts the mind for ever. More terrible

is it to see the horses, cattle, sheep, dogs, and poultry flying in terror before the flames. Helpless, homeless, tenderless, the flight of animals is truly tragic to behold. Worse still is the tragedy of the settlers, men, women, and children, scorched, frantic, and terror driven, seeking succour and solace from the police. And solace they need, for behind in the blaze is home; within and around the home all their earthly possessions. The careless always pay the penalty. Settlers who fire-guard their homes are reasonably safe.

The stirring tale of how Constable Conradi saved a family is always worth repeating. Constable Conradi was having a meal with a rancher named O'Neill. A great fire was heralded, sweeping up from the south-east. Conradi's first question was, "Are there any settlers in danger?" Mr. O'Neill intimated that a Mr. Young and family of ten were in the line of fire. Young's home was not fireguarded. Conradi, careless of danger, mounted his horse and rode almost to death. The sequel is very well told in that excellent book written by A. L. Haydon (*The Riders of the Plain*). In there you can see the following letter, a plain tale, but an epic of courage and devotion to duty. Mr. Young (the settler) writes—

"When Mr. Conradi arrived he promptly helped me with the plough, and we finished the

furrow. He, thinking the guard was large enough, got the horses inside. Mr. Conradi then thought it was time for us to get ready to fight the fire; we got pails and baths of water, soaking blankets and sacks for fighting fire. Mr. Conradi then set a back fire going, he taking the south end corner, I taking the south-west, and everything seemed to be going on satisfactorily. My wife and family were all helping. Suddenly the fire appeared on some hills to the south-west, rushing down with hurricane force and jumping the back fire Mr. Conradi had made, he fighting it all the time with most heroic pluck, not giving in till hope had gone. The fire he fought was of extraordinary fierceness, the grass being very long and dry and the wind blowing a gale.

"His pluck and endurance I cannot praise too highly. He was fighting till he was nearly suffocated, his hat burned off his head, hair singed, and vest on fire. When all hope had gone, he rushed to me and told me to get my wife and family and follow him to the outhouses. We could not see them, the smoke and flames were so thick—we could see only a few yards. Mr. Conradi ran through the fire and eventually found my wife and children standing in the middle of a slough. He rushed in and took the two youngest in his arms and brought all safely through, and not too soon, for they were nearly suffocated with smoke, and almost immediately fire surrounded the slough. They must have either been suffocated or badly burned had he not rescued them.

"We then turned our attention to the horses, and found them terribly burned. Mr. Conradi's was badly burned about the head and hindquarters; we cut them loose and led them to a place of safety. The next morning I looked at the horses and found Mr. Conradi's in a terrible state; its eyes were burned so badly it could not see, and its mouth burned to such an extent that it could not eat or drink, and it was, in most dreadful agony. He mercifully shot it on his return. It could not possibly have lived; and eventually must have starved to death. My wife and family owe their lives to Mr. Conradi, and I feel with them we shall never be able to repay him for his brave conduct."

The following lines, humble as they are in the eyes of the critics, but written by Trooper Boyce, act as a finishing note to this chapter of heroism:—

"Lo! awake the prairie echoes with
The ever-welcome sound,
Ring out the 'Boot and Saddle,' till
Its stirring notes resound.
Our chargers toss their bridled heads,
And chafe against the reins;
Ring out, ring out the marching call,
For the Riders of the Plains.

"The fire-king stalks the prairie,
And fearful 'tis to see,
The rushing wall of flame and smoke
Girdling round us rapidly;
'Tis then we shout defiance,
And mock his fiery chains,
For safe the cleared circle guards
The Riders of the Plains.

" There is no marble column,
There is no graven stone
To blazen to a curious world
The deeds they may have done ;
But the prairie flower blows lightly there,
And creeping wild rose trains
Its wealth of summer beauty o'er
Those Riders of the Plains."

CHAPTER XVII

ESKIMO DON JUANS

IF the Force has found fame in the prairie, it has been crowned with immortality in the frozen North. Only policemen know the fearful hardships, the awful dangers, and the tragic deaths on lone patrols. These outposts are not the result of a mania for law, or the desire to crow like a cock in the land of the Eskimo. The desire to know one's great possessions, also to guard them, is characteristic of all men, all nations. The North is a cold inheritance, but surely a rich one. Since 1670, men have travelled these lone regions. From here come those wonderful furs we see around the necks of the ladies of Montreal, New York, Paris, and London. The Hudson's Bay Company pioneered the way, but the way was not quite secure till the police went in and said law was law.

And we are a race of great adventurers, but it is said we have lost the habit and care no more for those trails which lead to great discoveries. That view is reversed on close acquaintance with the

brave band of brothers who for a few dollars a week forsake the comfort of cities and pull out on sleighs for the land of snow, darkness, wolves, bears, and Eskimos. But how little one hears of the endurance and silent sufferings of our braves. Modesty is their creed, and silence the rule. Every day in the Arctic regions a Victoria Cross is won. Every year is issued the bald report—

Died :

Inspector So and So.

Sergeant So and So.

Constable So and So.

Total. 3

Still, this is a trait of manliness. We have no desire to emulate the habits of Spain when the whole land is beflagged on the return of a platoon from a week-end in Moroccó. But once in a lifetime it is good to record the deeds of the manly if only to remind the thoughtless that we own the North and to inform the mighty that our work goes on.

Columbus was great and his endurance remarkable. Cortez did well, but he forgot to be a gentleman. Cook was a marvel in the Antarctic. And Rhodes was a giant in Rhodesia. These men endured much for Empire, science, and discovery, but did they ever sleigh in a blizzard, go blind in a

whirling storm, stagger, stagger on with limbs slowly, slowly freezing, or await death in a drift with wolves and bears in the offing?

It is much easier to "fill the bill" of Romance when the sun is shining and war correspondents looking on, but how different in the cold, in the darkness, alone, alone, and when dying, only the warm stomach of a faithful dog to warm one's feet, while awaiting the call of the Master!

Now let me tell you a story of two brave gentlemen, Inspector J. W. Phillips and Sergeant A. H. Joy, who went on what is called the Belcher Islands Patrol. This is a bleak land, inhabited by weak and unfortunate Eskimos, seventy miles of rough sea lying between them and a trading post. The tribe numbered one hundred and twenty-eight, many of the men being old and crippled by gun wounds, therefore unable to hunt. They live on seals and fish—when they get them. But more often they feed on mice, roots, and berries. Their boats are poor, so they can only sail in the calmest weather; this checks them in the hunt for food. And they have few guns to kill animals for food. Without good boats, nets, guns, and ammunition life is a dull affair for the Eskimo. Of course, they have their bows and arrows, but animals who can scent man a mile away want catching, or rather killing, with an arrow. As for traps, about two per man was the number. All this conveys

little to the man in civilisation, but those who know will grip the hardship and terror of it all.

Still, there is romance, there is passion, and often wonder in the land of the Eskimo. An Eskimo loves a rifle; for a rifle he, at times, will sell his soul. And for a woman, he will murder, murder savagely. Here you must use your imagination. Picture the lonely land. Picture the tragic tribe. Then fancy you see and hear a paraffin-driven boat, thump! thump! thumping into this wilderness. In the boat are two police officers and four white sailors. It is now easy to imagine the confusion on the squat faces of the natives, to understand the panic of the children, and realise how sure is the hand of justice when a murder is committed.

Murder had been done. The inspector became the coroner, the crew took the part of jury, the sergeant acted as clerk of the court. There was no gothic or corinthian pile to give a setting to the scene. There on the ugly beach, littered with rocks, bones, garbage, and wreckage, sat the representatives of the Department of Justice. To the "Temple" came the chief and heads of nine families; through the lips of an interpreter a tragic story was told.

The crime was the murder of Ketaushuk.

Ketaushuk was the Don Juan of the Belcher Island land. Though he was poor and often hungry,

he was a dreamer of dreams, a lover of women, and so strong in his passions that he had his way. Ketaushuk was married, but his wife had gone thin, the wrinkles were over her, the eye was dull, the lips cold; in short, there was no response to the fires which consumed the soul of Ketaushuk. Even had his wife been young and charming, that, according to his friends, would have been no guarantee of fidelity, for it was known in the land of the Eskimo that Ketaushuk from youth had pursued the daughter of the bard, also the wives of his own friends.

Diamonds mean nothing to the Eskimo women, but coloured beads, needles, a coloured handkerchief, moccasins nicely frilled, and a smoke of good tobacco mean much. Plentee much. And from those white men who sail in whaling ships, Ketaushuk had once received a bottle of whisky, a sip of which had glorified the charms of women, and a sip to them had, for the moment, glorified Ketaushuk. Thus he became Byron, Shelley, Blue Beard, and Don Juan. A terror to husbands of lovely women, a fear to mothers who would barter their daughters elsewhere, and an enemy of those youths who before they had plunged into the realms of passion, were seized with the spirit of social reform.

Be it known that in the land of the Eskimo once a man has taken unto himself a wife, it is a

sign of madness to covet thy neighbour's wife. But this ancient law is often defied. Ketaushuk had long defied it. His affairs were carried by gossips from camp to camp. In the igloos at night, women talked while their husbands slept; his charmers were named; his gifts were known; and they all spoke of his fierce and wonderful eyes, his masterful ways; and that magnetism which women know is fatal to romance, but often risked to understand. Thus Ketaushuk was labelled at the inquest as "a bad man after women." Language is plain in the land of the Eskimo.

Out of the mouths of startled natives the interpreter plucked the story of the crime. Ningeeoo was beautiful, she was plump, she had those eyes which lure and the lines of Sheba when shorn of the padding of the North. But Ningeeoo was the wife of Mukpooloo. Mukpooloo loved Ningeeoo. When hunting or fishing his eyes often turned to the igloo wherein his loved one dwelt. Of all the women of the land Ningeeoo was queen. But Ketaushuk had decreed that she must charm him, that she must light his lamp, slice the frozen deer, gather his berries, rub his feet when his feet were cold, and be unto him what she was to Mukpooloo. Not exactly new this wicked scheme, but it roused a storm in the breasts of the tribe. Fuel, maybe, was added to the flames because it was Ningeeoo, and not Akafak, Nakanoo, and

Ninintitoo, three women Ketaushuk had once loved and now scorned.

Ningeeoo was taken from Mukpooloo, the greatest disturbance being made by Mukpooloo, which surely points to the wickedness of Ningeeoo. And then the war was raised. The chief was angry, the men were wild, and, somehow, the women were mad. There was anger in the land of the Eskimo, threats of reprisals too, but Ketaushuk boldly said that he would shoot the man who would take Ningeeoo away. This terrified the land. Ketaushuk was surely mad. And so they left him. He lived alone in isolated parts with the two women, his wife and Ningeeoo. His wife accepted her lot, and because of love—or was it fear?—ministered unto Ketaushuk and Ningeeoo. But passion is only fleeting. It is a fire, and no matter how fierce, it dwindles, dwindles down. Ketaushuk had tired of Ningeeoo. Ketaushuk was tired of Coventry, too. He longed to be with the band again, for there were others about whom he now dreamed his dreams, such is the madness of this fell disease.

But the band were now alarmed at Ketaushuk. He was so gloomy, so sullen, his eyes were strange, and he talked to himself as he hobbled over the trail. The primitive and superstitious Eskimo declared again that he was mad. Ketaushuk might murder their wives, thought the men; what

then would life be in the silent igloos of the North? To defend their wives they stayed at home, thus missing the deer, the fish, the seals, and food for winter storage. Faced with such a serious situation a tribal council was held, the heads of all the families being present.

The interpreter told the court that the council decreed that Ketaushuk must be killed on the first opportunity and by the first man who saw him.

Ningeeoo, sick of Ketaushuk, was used as a decoy. She wanted to go back to Mukpooloo. She was therefore willing to use her charms to lure Ketaushuk to death. Mukpooloo, Tukautauk, and Awarook determined on the deed. They lay in ambush awaiting the return of Ketaushuk from the hunting ground. At last he came, ever so slowly, for life was dull now; joy had fled, his bones were creaking with the penalties of passion. But on looking up he saw Ningeeoo. She had never looked so fair. And she was smiling, too. There was sympathy in her heart. This cheered him, his step quickened, and he hurried to meet her at the tent door.

"Ningeeoo! . . . My Ningeeoo!" and they went within as in the days of love. Mukpooloo, instead of being roused to fury and vengeance, rose out of his hiding and turned away, slinking like a dog from the hour of revenge, which showed his fear of Ketaushuk. But the two others rushed

in, and with the aid of the two women he had loved, Tukautauk shot him dead.

Ningeeoo gladly buried him in the grave.

* * *

This was the story told to the court on the bleak shores of the Arctic. It may seem amusing in parts, but there was tragedy ringing through. It was one of those awkward situations in the North. Fortunately, wise men held the reins.

The verdict of the coroner's jury, after finding that the deceased had been killed by Tukautauk, said—

“After careful consideration of the statements submitted, we have agreed that the deceased, Ketaushuk, although wilfully murdered by his fellow-tribesmen, was killed for the common good and safety of the band, consisting of fifty or more souls.

“The act, although deliberately committed, was done erroneously at the instance of a council composed of the entire male population (grown) of said land, and entirely without malice or intrigue on the part of the councillors for the following reasons:—

“(1) Immediate starvation of at least the women and children.

“(2) Being in actual fear of being killed, justified by constant threats from said Ketaushuk, considered by the band to be *non compos mentis*.

"We therefore strongly recommend, owing to the primitive existence and the total absence of all knowledge of law on the part of the natives of these islands, that no criminal charge be laid against any party to the act, nor any individual to be held responsible. We further recommend that a responsible representative of the Government be sent amongst these people to instruct them in the laws of the country."

In accordance with this verdict, Inspector Phillips contented himself, so far as this tragedy was concerned, with warning the tribe to refrain in future from taking the law into their own hands, and with explaining to them the course to pursue in the event of any crime being committed by any one of the band.

Inspector Phillips adds—

"These people are not criminals, naturally. Stealing and lying among them are unknown, and on making inquiries I am informed that it has been twenty, and some say forty, years since any killing took place among the Belcher Islanders."

* * * *

II

The next case was the murder of Ko-Okyaug.

There was no romance about Ko-Okyaug. He was not beautiful, he was not brave, he was afraid

of the bear, the wolves, even the caribou. And he was lazy, too. Ko-Okyauck ought not to have been an Eskimo; he was designed for a Sheik of Arabia, where sheiks clap their hands to call for pipes, wine, music, passion, and love. Ko-Okyauck was stupid when using the snow knife in the making of an igloo. His hands were too awkward at making the sinews of deer into thongs for trading sleighs, dog harness, clothing, tents, and so on. His clothes were always thrown on, never an attempt to fit or please the fair sex. He would eat fish caught by his friends, and sleep with their wives when his friends went out to the trail. Ko-Okyauck was truly a worthless and repulsive fellow.

One day he was suddenly surged with a passion for Niveauseauk, his wife's sister. She was comely, if she was poor. Rags could not hide her shapelessness. The lack of soap somehow did not spoil her charms. And when she smiled, Ko-Okyauck was smitten bodily with evil fires. So he seized Niveauseauk and ran away with her. As said before, such an act is in the land of the Eskimo decreed as mad. Mad he must have been, for he sent messages to the camp saying he would kill the people there.

But in the tribe there was one who had the arts of a K.C. He went to Ko-Okyauck, and on the bench of the igloo he smoked with the bad man and Niveauseauk. They listened to this messenger,

for his voice was soft, he had the humility of the law when a case must be won. And he talked so nicely about the folly of loneliness, how they missed them from the band, the coming of a great feast of deer, seal, trout, berries, and candles, also a dance at which four women were to dance a sort of Eskimo can-can. Kō-Okyauck was smitten with remorse, while Niveauseauk sighed; sighed for the feast, the dance, and, whisper it not, for the love of this Eskimo "K.C." But the messenger was so skilful, so humble, so apparently full of goodness, that Ko-Okyauck was not aware of the sighs of Niveauseauk, or the secret hopes of this ambassador.

So charmed was Ko-Okyauck, and so concerned about the frost-bitten feet of this man who had made a long trail to see them, that he invited him to sleep in the igloo, and insisted that the K.C. should sleep with his feet on the warm abdomen of Niveauseauk, the Eskimo remedy for cold feet, and in this case, the indication of trust and gratitude. While Ko-Okyauck slept Niveauseauk sighed.

In the morning the party left the igloo and returned to the band. His wife welcomed him; at the feast the prodigal son was forgiven by all. But at the dawn of day Ko-Okyauck relapsed. The magic wrought by the wizard had vanished; he was surly, he was rude; he could not be

reconciled. He left camp with a gun, telling his wife before going that he meant to ambush the others and kill them off. His wife gave the alarm; two men followed him, but when he saw them he embarked in his kayak and put to sea, but they followed him out and herded him back to camp. He again was asked to reform, but he was defiant. Yes, he was surely mad, said the primitive Eskimo.

A council was called. It was decided that he should be tied up, when he could do no harm. He was seized, bound hand and foot, and taken to a small island, a short distance from the camp; the mode of transport was by laying him on two kayaks (skin-boats) tied together. The unfortunate man was left all night on the island without food or drink. In the evening he was visited by some of the men, who tightened his cords to make sure he did not escape. But next afternoon he was seen walking about the island, having cut his cords on sharp stones.

That evening he was again visited, and the aforesaid "K.C." was instructed by the chief to ask him if he would reform. If he would then they could release him. To the interpreter it was stated that he declined; it was also said the question was not put. Anyhow, it was proved that Ko-Okyauk was tied up in such a brutal manner that he was strangled and died.

The jury decreed that Ko-Okyauck was put to death, "being wilfully and maliciously tied with seal lines until death came by strangulation without any just cause or apparent reason." But—

"After carefully considering the destitute condition of the natives of the Belcher Islands and their miserable means of subsistence, we strongly recommend that these men be not taken into custody at the present time; that their immediate arrest is not justified in face of certain starvation by their families, consisting of twenty-five or more persons, which in that event would deprive them of the only means by which they can exist."

* * * *

And here is a noble side of the picture so far as the police are concerned. Inspector Phillips had started on his voyage with a month's provisions for his party, which consisted in all of six men. On his arrival at the islands he, in view of the apparent misery, also out of the bigness of his heart, was compelled to give the food to the Eskimos, who had positively nothing to eat while the earlier investigation was in progress. That was the act of a great gentleman! It was in keeping with the traditions of the North-West Police.

I wonder if Britain knows?

* * * *

III

While Sergeant Douglas and Constable Eyre were patrolling near Chesterfield Inlet, word was received from a Hudson Bay factor at Baker Lake that two of his hunters had been murdered, the murderer being at large and the people much frightened. Sergeant Douglas promptly decided to go to the scene of the murder. The constable was sent back to Fullerton. Sergeant Douglas with two natives then set out. But this story is so well told by Sergeant Douglas and so ably edited by the Commissioner that I give the gist of it. After much trouble, Sergeant Douglas arrived on the scene of the murder. Edjogajuch was chief of the tribe.

Here is the sergeant's story:—

"I had an igloo built and sent for Edjogajuch. I then told him through the interpreter that I had heard that one of his tribe, Ou-ang-wak, had killed two men. He replied that this was so. I further told him that this was contrary to the white man's law, and I was down here to see that Ou-ang-wak, and that I was not going back without doing so. I then suggested that in the morning he take me to the camp across the lake. This he refused to do, as he said that he also might get shot.

"I tried to get my natives to go with me to the camp, but without success. I sent again for Edjogajuch and told him that I looked upon him

as a chief in this district, and it was up to him, either to take me to this camp or go there himself and bring this native Ou-ang-wak to me. He said that he would not go with me, but would go alone and try and get him. I told him that I would wait here at this camp for three days, and if at the end of that time he was not back, or had no word of him, I should come myself to look for Ou-ang-wak. He was much frightened, as he undoubtedly believed that as soon as I saw Ou-ang-wak I should shoot him. I gave him my word that no harm would come to Ou-ang-wak or any other of the natives if they did what was right and showed no strife."

Accordingly, Edjogajuch left his camp, and late in the following afternoon he returned with Ou-ang-wak and the woman.

"On their arrival at the camp," Sergeant Douglas says, "I sent for all the natives to come to my igloo, where, through the interpreter, I gave Ou-ang-wak the usual warning in such cases before arrest. But I felt perfectly sure that this had no meaning whatever to him, as he was very frightened at the time, taking no notice of the interpreter, and never taking his eyes off me.

"I made full inquiries with reference to the two dead men, and noticed that frequently the natives questioned would address the accused for information."

Sergeant Douglas then arrested Ou-ang-wak.

"I then told him that he would have to come with me to the white man's land, as the Big Chief there wanted to see him. He asked me what they were going to do with him and would they kill him. I told him that I had no idea, but I assured him that if he acted square with me he would be well treated and taken outside to the Big White Chief. He at first did not wish to come, but I had another talk with the rest of the tribe, and explained to them that they were dependent entirely on the white man for all they got from the trade stores, and that if they did not obey the laws of the white man they would not be allowed to trade at the stores, and in consequence would be in a very bad way. This had the desired effect, and the chief informed me that Ou-ang-wak was ready to start any time I wanted him."

The question now arose as to the disposition of the woman in the case. The chief represented that her family lived at Churchill, that she had no relations in this region, and that unless she were taken back she would starve. She was very poorly dressed and in a very nervous condition, thinking that she was to be left in this camp far from her relations and with nobody to look after her. She asked to be taken to Churchill, and Sergeant Douglas decided to accede to her request.

Sergeant Douglas started on his return journey.

An incident of the journey was the finding of some natives at a place called Igloo, suffering from starvation, a child being dead and two adults in bed too weak to stand; Sergeant Douglas left with them as much food as he could spare, and on arrival at Chesterfield he organised and despatched a relief party.

Sergeant Douglas' aim now was to place his prisoner at the disposal of the legal tribunals of the country. He took Ou-ang-wak to Churchill, arriving there after some hard travel. Two of the natives, one of them Ou-ang-wak, suffered badly from snow blindness, and a dog was lost in a peculiar manner. "The last day into Churchill, one of the dogs played out. Not knowing exactly where we were, but being sure that we were close, I packed this dog on the sled. When coming in sight of the post, dark at night, the dogs started to run; the played-out dog fell off the sled, and was never seen afterwards. I sent a native back to look for him, but it was too dark to locate him. In all probability he was trapped or killed by wolves."

The statement made by Ou-ang-wak at Churchill is so singular a document that it may be quoted:—

"Taken at Fort Churchill, Man., by Sergeant W. C. Douglas, before the undersigned members of the Hudson's Bay Company. Interpreted by Alexander Oman, interpreter for the Hudson's Bay Company, Fort Churchill.

"My name is Ou-ang-wak. I am a Paddle-muit. I do not know how old I am, but I am old enough to have a wife.

"My home is at 'Shekoligyouak,' in the Baker Lake district.

"My mother and father are both dead and I make my home with my married sister. According to the custom of my tribe I was given a wife a long time ago; she is only a child yet and is still living with her people.

"I did not like not having a woman old enough to live with, as I am old enough to have a wife and I wanted one.

"At my camp, I had four dogs belonging to a native named 'Apittuk.' The brothers called 'Angalookyouak' and 'Alecummick' wanted these dogs, and were very angry because I would not give them the dogs.

"I heard it said in the camp that 'Angalookyouak' would kill me.

"One morning early in the hot weather, the moon before the ice starts to make on the lakes, I went to 'Angalookyouak's' tent and looked in and saw that he was alone in the tent and that he was in his bed and asleep. I went back to my tent and got my rifle, a 38-55 Winchester, and went back to 'Angalookyouak's' tent and shot him through the top of the head while he was sleeping; he died quick.

"When I had killed 'Angalookyouak' I was afraid of his brother 'Alecommick,' so I ran quickly over to his tent, which was quite close, opened up the flap, and saw him sitting on his bed. I shot at him and hit him in the right shoulder, and he fell over dead.

"After I shot these two brothers they were left in their tents for five days, this being the custom of the tribe, and at the end of that time they were buried. I helped to bury them, and I left the rifle that I shot them with at the graveside.

"I did not know that it was wrong to shoot these men, and if I did so that the white men would come after me.

"I am sorry now that I did this and would not do so again.

"I have travelled a lot with these two brothers, deer hunting, winter and summer, and to the trade store at Baker Lake; during these trips I always got along with them very well, and there were never any angry words spoken.

"This was the first time that I ever had any trouble with them.

"After 'Angalookyouak' was dead I took his woman as I had no wife, and this woman had no people to go to close to, and all her people were at Churchill.

"The above is a true and correct interpretation

of the statement of 'Ou-ang-wak' to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signed, ALEXANDER OMAN, Interpreter.

Witness (signed) W. R. MITCHELL.

Witness (signed) H. W. MACDONALD.

His Mark.

OU-ANG-WAK.

Witness (signed) W. R. MITCHELL.

Witness (signed) H. W. MACDONALD."

Bringing Ou-ang-wak to civilisation did not solve all the difficulties of the case; and a trial in civilisation presented grave difficulties. He was, of course, entitled to all the protection that British law affords, and this meant that he must be tried with all the safeguards which are thrown about persons who are accused of crime. The alleged murder took place in the general neighbourhood of Baker Lake, and the witnesses, i.e. the fifteen or sixteen natives who were in camp at the time, live in that region; no capital case hitherto has been tried nearer the scene than Norway House. The solution which was proposed, and which was approved by the Department of Justice, was as follows:—

"That an officer of the force, having the powers of a coroner, and such other ranks as appear advisable, be sent to the Baker Lake district, for

the purpose of holding an inquest and gathering the necessary evidence."

Inspector Reames was sent, but on hearing of the inspector's departure to hold the inquest, the prisoner became greatly excited and fled in the night. He died in a blizzard.

Death relieved the land of a murderer!

* * * *

To understand what Sergeant Douglas and others have to do, look at the map, study the meteorological conditions, see the record of deaths from exposure, starvation, blindness, and wolves, you will then realise that when I say that if the police have found fame on the prairie, they have achieved immortality in the frozen North.

Yes, Britain ought to know!

CHAPTER XVIII

THE LONELIEST SOLDIER ON EARTH

You may drink to your soldiers, your sailors, all
those

Who at fighting have proven their worth,
But here is a health to the "Bobby in Red"—
The loneliest soldier on earth.

While you and your cousins in Canada, there
Are living in luxury's lap,
The "Bobby in Red" on lonely patrol,
Is guarding the line on your map.

He may be the son of an earl or a duke,
He may be a shopkeeper's Jack;
Whatever he is, he is serving his King,
With England and Law at his back.

Through desert and forest, o'er mountain and plain,
Now freezing,—now scorched by the sun,
He's Law and he's Order, he's Jury and Judge,
He's "Tommy" and "Bobby" in one.

THE LONELIEST SOLDIER ON EARTH 307

'Gainst murder and riot, 'gainst smuggling and theft;

He knows no excuse will atone;

So when he is ordered to "Bring in his man,"

He knows he must do it alone.

So miles without end, every day in the year,

Alone with his horse and his gun,

He fights the good fight, content in his heart

To know that his duty is done.

No trumpet to cheer him, no rattle or drum,

No bivouac comrades at night;

He lives and he dies, alone in his strength,

Alone, for his King and his right.

So drink to your soldiers, your sailors, and those

Who at fighting have proven their worth;

But I'll pledge a toast to the "Bobby in Red,"

The loneliest soldier on earth!

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